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Percy Society.

EARLY ENGLISH POETRY,
BALLADS,
AND POPULAR LITERATURE
OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

EDITED FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS
AND SCARCE PUBLICATIONS.

VOL. XVIII.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY,
BY T. RICHARDS, ST MARTIN'S LANE.

M.DCCC.XLVI.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XVIII.

THE PASTIME OF PLEASURE.

BY STEPHEN HAWES.

Council, 1845-6.

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PREFACE.

STEPHEN HAWES, the author of the following poem, was, according to the information gathered by Warton, a native of Suffolk, and studied in the University of Oxford, after which he travelled much in France, and “became a complete master of the French and Italian poetry.” He subsequently obtained the favour of King Henry VII, who made him groom of his privy chamber. To Warton’s information, we are at present able only to add, that it appears from a book of the expenses of the 12th Henry VIII, among the records in the Rolls House, that the following payment was made to our author on the 6th of January in that year : the play referred to is now perhaps lost.

“Item, to Mr. Hawse, for his play, vj^{li}. xij^s. iiij^d.”

Hawes was the author of several other works besides the one here printed, for an account of which we refer the reader to “Warton’s History of English Poetry.” They are in general of very little importance. “The Pastime of Pleasure,” which Warton characterises as his “capital work,”

is one of those allegorical writings which were popular with our forefathers, but which can now only be looked upon as monuments of the bad taste of a bad age. It is however a monument ; and being one of the most remarkable productions between the age of Lydgate and that of Wyatt and Surrey, it deserves to be reprinted as one of the links in the history of English poetry, without which that history would be incomplete. The old editions of this poem are very rare.

The present edition is a reprint of that of 1555, of which there is a copy in the British Museum. In two passages the language is so gross in the original, that it has been considered necessary to omit a few lines. These relate chiefly to the *dénouement* of a tale which was extremely popular in the Middle Ages, and which will be found told with somewhat more decency in the common chap-book story of the enchanter Virgil. It has been thought sufficient to print the simple text of this poem, without illustrative notes. From the nature of the work, the choice lay between giving a large mass of explanatory matter, or none at all, and the circumstances under which it has been published placed the former alternative entirely out of the question.

T. W.

The History of
GRAUND AMOURE and LA BEL PUCCELL,
CALLED
THE PASTIME OF PLEASURE,

Conteynyng the Knowledge of the Seven Sciences, and the
Course of Mans Life in this Worlde.

Invented by STEPHEN HAWES,
Grome of Kyng Henry the Seventh his chamber.

Anno Domini
1555.

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¶ This boke, called the Pastime of Pleasure, was made and compyled by Stephen Hawes, one of the gromes of the most honorable chambre of our soverayne lorde Kynge Henry the Seventh, the xxi. yere of his most noble reyne; chapitred and marked after the table here before sette.

THE
PASTIME OF PLEASURE.

RYGHT myghty prynce and redoubted soverayne,
Saylinge forth well in the shyppe of grace,
Over the waves of this lyfe uncertayne
Ryght towarde heven to have dwellyng place,
Grace dothe you guyde in every doubtfull cace.
Your governaunce dothe evermore eschewe
The synne of slouth, enemy to vertewe.

Grace stereth well, the grace of God is grete,
Whyche you hath brought to your ryall se,
And in your ryght it hath you surely sette
Above us all to have the soverayntie;
Whose worthy power and regall dygnite,
All our rancour and our debate gan ceace,
Hath to us brought bothe welthe, reste and peace.

Frome whome descendeth by the ryghtfull lyne
Noble prynce Henry, to succede the crowne;
That in his youth doth so clerely shyne,
In every vertue castinge the vyce adowne.
He shall of fame attaine the hye renowne;
No doubtte but grace shal him well enclose,
Whiche by true right sprange of the reed rose.

Your noble grace and excellent highnes
For to accepte I beseche right humbly
Thys lytle boke, opprest wyth rudenes,
Without rethorycke or coloure crafty;
Nothings I am experte in poetry,
As the monke of Bury, floure of eloquence,
Whiche was in the time of great excellence

Of your predecessour, the v. kyng Henry,
Unto whose grace he did present
Ryght famous bokes of parfit memory,
Of hys faynyng with termes eloquent;
Whose fatall fictions are yet permanent,
Grounded on reason, with cloudy fygures
He cloked the trouth of all his scryptures.

The lyght of trouth I lacke cunning to cloke,
To drawe a curtayne I dare not to presume,
Nor hyde my matter with a misty smoke,
My rudenes cunning doth so sore consume:
Yet as I may I shall blowe out a fume
To hyde my mynde underneth a fable,
By covert coloure well and probable.

Besechyng your grace to pardon myne ignoraunce,
Whiche this fayned fable, to eschue idlenes,
Have so compyled now without doubtaunce,
For to present to your hye worthynes,
To folowe the trace and all the perfitenes
Of my maister Lydgate with due exercise,
Suche fayned tales I do fynde and devyse.

For under a coloure a truthe may aryse,
As was the guyse in olde antiquitie,
Of the poetes olde, a tale to surmyse,
To cloke the truthe of their infirmitie,
Or yet on joye to have mortalitie.
I me excuse if by neglygence
That I do offende for lacke of science.

CAP. I.

HOWE GRAUNDE AMOURE WALKED IN A MEDOWE, AND MET
WYTH FAME ENVYRONED WITH TONGUES OF FYRE.

WHEN Phebus entred was in Geminy,
Shynying above in his fayre golden spere,
And horned Dyane then but one degre
In the Crabbe had entred fayre and cleare;
When that Aurora did well appeare
In the depured ayre and cruddy firmament,
Forth then I walked without impediment

Into a medowe both gaye and glorious,
Whiche Flora depainted with many a colour,
Lyke a place of pleasure moste solacious,
Encensyng out the aromatike odoure
Of Zepherus breath, whiche that every floure
Through his fume doth alwaye engender.
So as I went among the flowres tender,

By sodayne chaunce a fayre path I founde,
On whiche I loked and ryght oft I mused,
And then all about I behelde the grounde
With the fayre path whiche I sawe so used.
My chaunce or fortune I nothyng refused;
But in the path forth I went apace,
To knowe whether and unto what place

It woulde me bryng by any similitude.
So forth I went, were it ryght or wrong,
Tyll that I sawe of royall pulchritude
Before my face an ymage fayre and strong,
With two fayre handes stretched out along
Unto two hye wayes there in particion,
And in the ryght hande was this description:

This is the strayght waye of contemplacion
Unto the joyfull tower perdurable:
Who that will unto that mancion,
He must forsake all thinges variable,
With the vayne glory so muche deceivable,
And though the way be hard and daungerous,
The last ende therof shal be ryght precious.

And in the other hande ryght fayre wrytten was,
This is the way of worldly dignitie;
Of the active life who wyll in it passe
Unto the tower of fayre dame Beautye,
Fame shall tell hym of the way of certaintie
Unto La Bell Pucell, the fayre lady excellent,
Above all other in cleare beauty splendent.

I behelde ryght well bothe the wayes twayne,
And mused oft whiche was best to take;
The one was sharpe, the other was more playne;
And unto my selfe I began to make
A sodayne argument, for I myght not slake
Of my great musyng of this royall ymage,
And of these two wayes so muche in usage:

For this goodly picture was in altitude
Nyne fote and more, of fayre marble stone,
Ryght well favoured and of great altitude,
Though it were made full many yeres agone.
Thus stode I musynge my selfe all alone
By right long tyme; at the last I went
The active waye with all my whole entent.

Thus all alone I began to travayle
Forthe on my waye by long continuaunce;
But often tymes I had great marvayle
Of the by pathes so full of pleasaunce,
Whiche for to take I had great doubtaunce;
But evermore, as nere as I myght
I toke the waye whiche went before me ryght.

And at the last, when Phebus in the west
Gan to avayle with all his beames mery,
When cleare Dyana in the fayre south est
Gan for to ryse, lightyng our emispery
With clowdes cleare without the stormy pery,
Me thought afarre I had a vysyon
Of a picture of marveyulous facion :

To whiche I went without lenger delaye,
Beholdyng well the ryght faire portrayture
Made of fyne copper, shydyng faire and gaye,
Full well truely accordyng to measure,
And, as I thought, nyne fote of stature,
Yet in the brest with letters fayre and blewe
Was wrytten a sentence olde and true:

This is the waye and the sytuacion
Unto the toure of famous doctrine:
Who that wil learne must be ruled by reason
And with all his diligence he must enclyne
Slouth to eschue and for to determine,
And set his hert to be intelligible ;
To a willyng harte is nought impossible.

Besyde the ymage I adowne me sette,
After my laboure my selfe to repose,
Tyll at the last with a gaspyng nette
Slouth my head caught with his whole purpose.
It vayled not the bodye for to dispose
Against the head, when it is applyed,
The head must rule, it cannot be denied.

Thus as I satte in a deadly slomber,
Of a great horne I harde a royal blast,
With which I awoke, and had a great wonder
From whence it came: it made me sore agast.
I loked about; the nyght was wel nere past,
And fayre golden Phebus in the morow graye
With cloudes redde began to breake the daye.

I sawe come ryding in a valey farre
A goodly ladye, envyroned about
With tongues of fyre as bright as any starre,
That fyry flambes ensensed alway out,
Whiche I behelde and was in great doubte;
Her palfrey swyft renning as the winde,
With two white grayhoundes that were not behynde.

When that these grayhoundes had me so espied,
With faunying chere of great humilitie
In goodly haste they fast unto me hyed;
I mused why and wherfore it should be,
But I welcomed them in every degre.
They leaped oft and were of me ryght fayne;
I suffred them, and cheryshed them agayne.

Their collers were of golde and of tyssue fine,
Wherin their names appeared by scripture
Of dyamondes that clerely do shyne:
The letters were graven fayre and pure.
To reade their names I did my busy cure;
The one was Governauce, the other named Grace;
Then was I glad of all this sodayne cace.

And then the lady, with fiery flambe
Of brennyng tongues, was in my presence
Upon her palfrey, whiche had unto name
Pegase the swyfte, so fayre in excellence,
Whiche sometime longed with his preminence
To kyng Percius the sonne of Jubiter,
On whome he rode by the worlde so farre.

To me she sayde, she marvelled muche why
That her grayhoundes shewed me that favioure.
What was my name she asked me truly?
To whome I sayde it was La Graunde Amoure,
Besechyng you to be to me succoure
To the tower of Doctrine, and also me tell
Your proper name and where you do dwell?

My name, quod she, in all the worlde is knowen,
I-clipped Fame in every region,
For I my horne in sundry wyse have blowen
After the death of many a champion,
And with my tongues have made aye mencion
Of their great actes agayne to revive,
In flaming tongues for to abyde on lyve.

It was the custome of an olde antiquitie,
When the golden worlde had dominacion,
And nature, hyghe in her auctoritie,
More stronger had her operacion
Then she had nowe in her digression,
The people then dyd all their busye payne
After their death in fame to lyve agayne.

Recorde of Saturne, the first kyng of Crete,
Whiche in his youth through his diligence
Founde first plowyng of the landes swete;
And after this, by his great sapience,
For the comen profite and benevolence
Of all metalles he made division
One from another by good provision.

And then also, as some poetes fayne,
He found shotyng and drawyng of the bowe,
Yet as of that I am nothyng certayne;
But for his cunnyng, of hye degre and lowe
He was well beloved, as I do well knowe;
Through whose laboure and aye busy cure
His fame shall lyve and shall ryght long endure.

In whose tyme reigned also in Thessayle,
(A parte of Grece) the kyng Melizyus,
That was ryght strong and fierce in battaile;
By whose laboure, as the story sheweth us,
He brake first horses wilde and rigorous,
Teaching his men on them ryght well to ryde,
And he hym selfe did fyrst the horse bestryde.

Also Mynerve, the ryght hardy goddese
In the same time of so hyghe renowne,
Vainquished Pallas by her great worthynes,
And first made harneys, to laye his pryde adowne:
Whose great defence in every realme and towne
Was spredde about for her hye chyvalrye,
Whiche by her harneys wanne the victorye.

Doth not remayne yet in remembraunce
The famous actes of the noble Hercules,
That so many monsters put to utteraunce
By his great wisdom and hye prowes?
As the recule of Troye beareth good witnes;
That in his time he would no battayle take
But for the wealth of the commens sake.

Thus the whole myndes were ever fixt and set
Of noble men in olde tyme to devyse
Suche thynges as were to the comeyn proffet;
For in that tyme suche was their goodly guyse,
That after dethe theyr fame should aryse,
For to endure and abyde in mynde,
As yet in bokes we may them wrytten fynde.

O ye estates surmountynge in noblenesse,
Remember well the noble paynymys all,
How by theyr labour they wanne the hyennesse
Of worthy fame to raygne memoryall,
And them applyed ever, in specyall,
Thynges to practyse whiche should profyte be
To the comyn welthe and their heyres in fee.

CAP. II.

OF THE SWETE REPORTE OF FAME OF THE FAYRE LADY
LA BELL PUCCELL IN THE TOURE OF MUSYCKE

AND after thys, Fame gan to expresse
Of jeopardous way to the toure peryllous,
And of the beaute and the semelynesse
Of La Bel Pucell, so gaye and glorious,
That dwelled in the toure so marveyllous;
Unto whyche might come no maner of creature,
But by great laboure and harde adventure.

For by the way theyr lye in wayte
Gyauntes great, dysfigured of nature,
That all devoureth by theyr yll conceyte;
Agaynst whose streingth there may no man endure,
They are so huge and stroonge out of measure;
Wyth many serpentes foule and odyous,
In sundry lykenesse blacke and tedyous.

But behynde them a great see there is,
Beyond whyche see there is a goodly lande
Most full of fruyte replete wyth joye and blysse.
Of ryght fyne golde appereth all the sande
In this fayre realme, where the tower doth stand,
Made all of golde, enameled aboute
Wyth noble storyes whyche do appere wythout.

In whyche dwelleth by great aucthorytie
Of La Bell Pucell, whyche is so fayre and bryght,
To whome in beaute no pere I can se;
For lyke as Phebus above all sterres in lyght,
Whan that he is in his spere aryght,
Dothe excede wyth his beames cleare,
So dothe her beaute above other appeare.

She is bothe good, ay wyse and vertuous,
And also dyscended of a noble lyne;
Ryche, comly, ryght meke, and bounteous;
All maner vertues in her clerely shyne:
No vyce of her may ryght longe domine.
And I, dame Fame, in every nacyon
Of her do make the same relacyon.

Her swete reporte so my hert set on fyre
Wyth brennyng love moost hot and fervent,
That her to se I had greate desyre;
Sayenge to Fame; O lady excellent,
I have determyned in my judgement,
For La Bell Pucell the most fayre lady
To passe the waye of so greate jeopardy.

You shall, quod Fame, obtayne the vycory,
If you wyl do as I shall you saye,
And all my lesson retayne in memory.
To the toure of Doctryne ye shall take your waye.
You are now wythin a dayes journeye;
Bothe these greyhoundes shal kepe you company:
Loke that you cheryshe them full gently.

And Countenance, the goodly portres,
Shall let you in ful well and nobly,
And also shewe you of the parfytenes
Of all the seven scyences ryght notably.
There in your mynde you may ententyfly
Unto dame Doctryne gyve parfyte audyence,
Whyche shall enforme you in every scyence.

Farewell, she sayde, I maye not now abyde;
Walke on your waye, wyth all your hole delyght,
To the toure of Doctrine at thys morowe tyde,
Ye shall to morowe of it have a syght.
Kepe on your waye now before you right,
For I must hence to specyfy the dedes
Of theyr worthynesse accordynge to theyr medes.

And wyth that she dyd from me depart,
Upon her stede swyfter than the wynde.
Whan she was gone, full wofull was my herte;
Wyth inward trouble oppressed was my mynde.
Yet were the greyhoundes left wyth me behynde,
Whyche did me comforte in my great vyage
To the toure of Doctryne, with their fawnyng
[courage.

So forth I went, tossynge on my brayne,
 Greatly musyng, over hyll and vale.
 The way was troublous, and ey nothing playne;
 Tyll at the laste I came to a dale,
 Beholdyng Phebus declinyng lowe and pale;
 With my grayhoundes, in the fayre twylight,
 I sate me downe for to rest me all nyght.

Slouth upon me so fast began to crepe,
 That of fyne force I downe me layed
 Upon an hyll with my greyhoundes to slepe.
 When I was downe, I thought me well apayed,
 And to my selfe these wordes then I sayde:
 Who will attaine sone to his journeyes ende,
 To nouryshe slouth he may not condescende.

CAP. III.

HOWE FAME DEPARTED FROM GRAUNDE AMOURE, AND LEFT
 WITH HYM GOUVERNAUNCE AND GRACE, AND HOWE HE
 WENT TO THE TOWER OF DOCTRINE.

Thus then I slept, tyl that Auroras bemes
 Gan for to spreade about the firmament,
 And the clere sunne with his golden stremes
 Began for to ryse fayre in the orient,
 Without Saturnus blacke encombrement,
 And the litle byrdes makyng melodye
 Did me awake wyth their swete armony.

I loked about, and sawe a craggy roche
Farre in the west, neare to the element;
And as I dyd then unto it approche,
Upon the toppe I sawe refulgent
The royall tower of Morall Document,
Made of fine copper, with turrets fayre and hye,
Which against Phebus shone so marveyulously;

That for the very perfect bryghtnes,
What of the tower and of the cleare sunne,
I coulde nothyng beholde the goodlines
Of that palaice where as Doctrine did wonne;
Tyll at the last, with mysty wyndes donne,
The radiant bryghtnes of golden Phebus
Auster gan cover with clowde tenebrus.

Then to the tower I drewe nere and nere,
And often mused of the great hyghnes
Of the craggy rocke, whiche quadrant did appeare;
But the fayre tower so muche of ryches
Was all about sexangled doubtles,
Gargeyld with grayhoundes and with many lyons,
Made of fyne golde, with divers sundry dragons.

The little turrets with ymages of golde
About was set, whiche with the wynde aye moved.
Wyth propre vices that I did well beholde,
About the towers in sundry wyse they hoved,
Wyth goodly pypes in their mouthes i-tuned,
That with the wynde they pyped a daunce,
I-clipped Amour de la hault plesaunce.

CAP. IV.

HOWE HE WAS LET IN BY COUNTENAUNCE THE PORTERES,
AND OF THE MARVELOUS BUILDYNG OF THE SAME TOWER.

THE toure was great, and of marvelous wydnes,
To whyche there was no way to passe but one,
Into the toure for to have an intres;
A grece there was, y-chesyled all of stone
Out of the rocke, on whiche men dyd gone
Up to the toure; and in lykewise did I,
Wyth bothe the greyhoundes in my company.

Tyll that I came to a ryall gate,
Where I sawe stondynge the goodly portres,
Whiche axed me from whence I came alate?
To whome I gan in every thyng expresse
All myne adventure, chaunce, and busynesse,
And eke my name I tolde her every dell.
When she herde this, she lyked me ryght well.

Her name, she sayd, was called Countenaunce:
Into the besy courte she dyd me then lede,
Where was a fountayne depured of pleasance,
A noble sprynge, a ryall conduyte hede,
Made of fyne golde enameled with reed,
And on the toppe foure dragons blewe, and stoute
Thys dulcet water in foure partyes dyd spout.

Of whyche there flowed foure ryvers ryght clere,
Sweter than Nysus or Ganges was theyr odoure,
Tygrys or Eufrates unto them no pere.
I dyd than taste the aromatyke lycoure,
Fragraunt of fume, swete as any floure,
And in my mouthe it had a marveyulous cent
Of divers spyces; I knewe not what it ment.

And after thys farther forth me brought
Dame Countenaunce into a goodly hall:
Of jasper stones it was wonderly wrought
The wyndowes cleare, depured all of crystall,
And in the roufe on hye over all
Of golde was made a ryght crafty vyne;
In stede of grapes the rubies there did shyne.

The flore was paved with berall clarified,
With pillers made of stones precious,
Like a place of pleasure so gayely glorified,
It might be called a palaice glorious,
So muche delectable and solacious.
The hall was hanged, hye and circuler,
With cloth of arras in the rychest maner,

That treated well of a ful noble story,
Of the doubty waye to the tower perillous;
Howe a noble knyght should wyne the victory
Of many a serpente fowle and odious:
And the first matter then appeared thus;
Howe at a venture and by sodayne chaunce
He met with Fame by fortunes purveyaunce.

Whiche did hym shewe of the famous pulcritude
Of La Bell Pucell so cleare in beauty,
Excelling all other in every similitude;
Nature her favoured so muche in degree.
When he heard this, with fervent amytie,
Accompanied with Grace and Governauce,
He toke his waye without encombraunce

Unto the ryght famous tower of learnyng,
And so from thence unto the tower of chyvalry,
Where he was made knight the noble kyng
Called Melizeus, well and worthely;
And furthermore it sheweth full notably
Upon the arras imbrodred all of blewe,
What was his name with letters all of Grewe.

Thus with his verlet he toke on his waye
To the perillous tower and sytuation,
Metyng Folye, as he rode on his journey,
Ryding on a mare by great illusion;
After whom ensued fast Correction,
And in her hande a strong knotted whippe;
At every yarke she made hym for to skyppe.

And then Correction brought La Graund Amour
Unto the tower, whereas he myght well se
Divers men makyng ryght great dolour,
That defrauded women by their duplicitie;
Yet before this in perfite certaintie,
As the arras well did make relacion,
In Venus temple be made his oblacion.

After whiche he mette an hydeous gyaunt
Havyng thre heades of marveylous kynde;
With his great strokes he did hym daunt,
Castyng hym downe under the lynde,
With force and myght he did hym bynde,
Strikyng of his heades then everychone,
That of all thre heades he left not one.

This terryble gyant yet had a brother,
Whiche Graunde Amoure destroyed also,
Having foure heades more then the other,
That unto hym wrought mikel wo;
But he slewe sone his mortall foe,
Whiche was a great gyaunt with heades seven,
To marveylous nowe for me to neven.

Yet moreover he put to utteraunce
A venemous beast of sundry likenes,
Of divers beastes of ryght great mischaunce
Wherof the picture bare good wytnes;
For by his power and his hye worthynes
He did discomfyte the wonderous serpente
Of the seven metals, made by enchauntment.

And eke the clothe made demonstration
Howe he wedded the great lady beauteous,
La Bell Pucell, in her owne dominacion,
After his labour and passage daungerous,
With solemne joye and myrthe melodious.
This famous storye well pictured was
In the fayre hall upon the arras.

The marshall yclipped was dame Reason,
And the yewres also Observaunce,
The panter Plesaunce at every season;
The good butler Curteis Continuaunce
And the chefe coke was called Temperaunce,
The lydy chamberlayne named Fidelitie,
And the hye stewarde Liberalitie.

There sate dame Doctrine, that lady gent,
Whiche called me unto her presence,
For to knowe al the whole entent
Of my comyng unto her excellence.
Madame, I sayde, to learn your science
I am comen nowe me to applye,
With all my cure and perfect study.

And yet, also, I unto her then shewed
My name and purpose wythout doublenes.
For very greate joye than were endued
Her crystall eyes full of lowlenes,
Whan that she knewe of very sykernesse,
That I was he that should so attayne
La Bell Pucell wyth my busy payne.

And after thys I had ryght good chere;
Of meate and drynke there was great plenty.
Nothyng I wanted, were it chepe or dere.
Thus was I served wyth dylycate dysshes deyntie;
And after thys wyth all humylite
I went to Doctryne, prayenge her good grace,
For to assygne me my fyrst lernynge place.

Seven doughters, moost expert in connynge,
Wythouten foly she had well engendred;
As the seven Scyences in vertue so shynynge,
At whose encrease there is great thanks rendred
Unto the mother, as nothyng surrendred
Her good name and her dulcet sounde,
Whych did engendre theyr orygynall grounde.

And fyrst to Grammer she forthe me sent,
To whose request I dyd well obay;
Wyth delygence forth on my way I went,
Up to a chamber depaynted fayre and gay;
And at the chambre in ryght ryche araye
We were let in, by hygh auctoryte
Of the ryght noble dame Congruyte.

CAP. V.

HOW SCIENCE SENT HIM FYRST TO GRAMER, WHERE HE WAS
RECEIVED BY DAME CONGRUYTE.

THE lady Gramer, in all humbly wyse,
Dyd me receyve into her goodly scoole;
To whose doctrine I dyd me advertise
For to attayne, in her artyke poole,
Her gylted dewe, for to oppresse my doole;
To whom I sayde that I wold gladly lerne
Her noble connynge, so that I myght descerne

What that it is, and why that it was made?
To whych she answered than, in speciall,
By cause that connyng shoulde not pale ne fade,
Of every science it is originall,
Whych doth us teach ever in generall
In all good ordre to speke directly,
And for to wryte by true ortogرافy.

Somtyme in Egypt reigned a noble kyng,
Iclyped Evander, whych dyd well abounde
In many vertues, especially in lernyng;
Whych had a doughter, that by her study found
To wryte true Latyn the fyrst parfyt ground.
Whose goodly name, as her story sayes,
Was called Carmentis in her livyng dayes.

Thus in the tyme of olde antiquytie,
The noble phylosophers, wyth theyr whole delyghte,
For the comon prouffyte of all humanite,
Of the seven sciences for to knowe the ryght,
They studied many a long wynters nyght,
Eche after other theyr partes to expresse,
Thys was theyr guyse to eschewe ydelnesse.

The pomped carkes wyth foode dilicious
They dyd not feed, but to theyr sustinaunce;
They folowed not theyr fleshe so vycious,
But ruled it by prudent governaunce;
They were content alway wyth suffisaunce,
They coveyted not no worldly treasure,
For they knewe that it myght not endure.

But nowe a dayes the contrary is used:
To wynde the mony theyr studies be all set.
The comen profyt is often refused,
For well is he that may the money get
From his neyghbour wythout any let.
They thynke nothyng they shall from it pas,
Whan all that is shall be tourned to was.

The bryttel fleshe, nourisher of vyces,
Under the shadowe of evyll slogardy,
Must need haunte the carnall delices;
Whan that the brayne, by corrupt glotony,
Up so downe is tourned than contrary.
Frayle is the bodye to grete unhappynes,
Whan that the head is full of dronkennes.

So doo they now; for they nothyng prepece
Howe cruell deth doth them sore ensue.
They are so blynded in worldly negligence,
That to theyr merite they wyll nothyng renewe
The seven scyences, theyr slouth to eschewe;
To an others profyt they take now no keepe,
But to theyr owne, for to eate, drynke, and sleepe.

And all thys dame Gramer told me every dele,
To whom I herkened wyth all my diligence;
And after thys she taught me ryght well
Fyrst my Donet and then my accidence.
I set my mynde wyth Percyng influence
To lerne her scyence, the fyrst famous arte,
Eschewyng ydlenes and layeng all aparte.

Madame, quod I, for as much as there be
Eight partes of speche, I would knowe ryght fayne,
What a nounge substantive is in hys degre,
And wherefore it is so called certayne?
To whom she answered ryght gently agayne,
Sayeng alway that a nowne substantiue
Might stand wythout helpe of an adiectiue.

The Latyn worde whyche that is referred
Unto a thyng whych is subtancyall,
For a nowne substantiue is wel averred,
And wyth a gender is declynall;
So all the eyght partes in generall
Are Laten wordes, annexed properly
To every speche, for to speke formally.

And gramer is the fyrst foundement
Of every science to have construccyon:
Who knewe gramer wythout impediment
Shoulde perfytely have intellection
Of a lytterall cense and moralyzacion.
To construe every thyng ententifly,
The worde is gramer wel and ordinatly.

By worde the world was made orygynally,
The hye Kynge sayde, it was made incontinent;
He dyd commaunde, al was made shortly.
To the world the worde is sentencious judgemente.
I marked well dame Gramers sentement,
And of her than I dyd take my lycence,
Goynge to Logyke wyth all my dylygence.

CAP. VI.

HOW HE WAS RECEIVED OF LOGYKE.

So up I went unto a chambre bryghte,
Where was wonte to be a ryght fayre lady,
Before whome than, it was my hole delyght,
I kneeled adowne ful well and mekely,
Besechynge her to enstructe me shortely
In her noble science, which is expedient
For man to knowe in many an argument.

You shall, quod she, my scyence wel lerne,
In tyme and space, to your gret utilite;
So that in lokynge you shal than decerne
A frende from fo, and good from iniquyte :
Ryght from wronge ye shall know in certainte.
My scyence is all the yll to eschewe,
And for to knowe the false from the trewe.

Who wyll take payne to folowe the trace,
In this wrecched world, of trouth and ryghtwysenes,
In heven above he shal have dwellynge place.
And who that walketh the waye of derkenes,
Spendyng his tyme in worldly wretchednes,
Amyddes the erth, in hel most horrible,
He shall have payne nothyng extinguyssible.

So by logyke is good perceyveraunce
To devyde the good and the evyll asondre:
It is alwaye at mannes pleasaunce
To take the good and caste the evyll under.
If God made hell, it is thereof no wonder,
For to punyshe man that hadde intelligence,
To knowe goode from yll by trewe experience.

Logyke alwaye doth make probacion,
Provyng the pro well from the contrary,
In sondry wyse by argumentacion,
Grounded on reason well and wonderly.
Who understod all Logyke truely,
Nothyng by reason myght be in pledynge,
But he the trouth should have in knowlegyng.

Her wyse doctryne I marked in memory,
And toke my leve of her hye person,
Because that I myght no lenger tary.
The yere was spent, and so ferre than gon,
And of my lady yet syght had I none,
Whych was abydyng in the toure of Musyke:
Wherfore anone I went to Rethoryke.

CAP. VII.

HOW HE WAS RECEIVED OF RETHORYKE, AND WHAT
RETHORYKE IS. .

THAN above Logyke up we went a stayre,
Into a chambre gayly glorified,
Strowed wyth floures of all goodly ayre;
Where sate a lady gretly magnified,
And her true vesture clerely purified,
And over her head, that was bryght and shene,
She had a garlande of the laurell grene.

Her goodly chambre was set all about
With depured myrrours of speculation;
The fragraunt fumes dyd well encense out
All misty vapours of perturbacion.
More lyker was her habitacyon
Unto a place which is celestially,
Than to a certayne mancion fatall.

Before whom, than, I dyd knele adowne,
Sayeng: O sterre of famous eloquence,
O gylted goddesse of hyghe renowne,
Enspyred wyth the heavenly influence
Of the doulcet well of complacence,
Upon my mynd, wyth dewe aromatyke,
Distyll adowne thy lusty rethoryke.

And depaynt my tong wyth thy ryall floures
Of delicate odoures, that I may ensue
In my purpose to glad myne audytours,
And wyth thy power that thou me endue
To moralise thy lytterall censes trewe,
And clense away the myst of ygnoraunce
With depured beames of goodly ordinaunce.

With humble eres of perfyte audience,
To my request she dyd than enclyne;
Sayeng she wolde in her goodly scyence
In short space me so well indoctryne,
That my dull mynde it shoulde enlumyne
With golden beames, for ever to oppresse
My rude language and all my semplenesse.

I thanked her of her great gentylnes,
And axed her, after, this question:
Madame, I sayde, I wolde knowe doubtles
What rethoryke is, without abusion.
Rethoryke, she sayde, was founde by reason,
Man for to governe wel and prudently;
His wordes to ordre, his speche to purify.

Fyve partes hath Rethoryke, for to werke trewe,
Without whiche fyve there can be no sentence.
For these fyve do well evermore renue
The matter parfyte with good intellygence.
Who that will se them with all his dyligence,
Here foloweng I shall them specify,
Accordyng well all unto myne ordynary.

CAP. VIII.

OF THE FYRST, CALLED INVENCYON, AND A COMMENDACION
OF POETES.

THE fyrste of them is called Invencion,
Whiche surdeth of the most noble werke
Of v. inward wittes with hole affeccion,
As writeth right many a noble clerke,
Wyth mysty colour of cloudes derke,
How comyn wytte doothe full well electe
What it shoulde take, and what it shall abjecte.

And secondly, by ymaginacyon
To drawe a matter full facundious,
Full mervaylus is the operacion,
To make of nought, reason sentencious,
Clokyng a trouthe wyth colour tenebrous;
For often under a fayre fayned fable
A trouthe appereth gretely profitable.

It was the guyse in old antiquyte,
Of famous poets ryght ymaginatif,
Fables to fayne by good auctorite;
They were so wyse and so inventife,
Theyr obscure reason, fayre and sugratife,
Pronounced trouthe under cloudy figures,
By the inventyon of theyr fatall scriptures.

And thyrddly, they hadde suche a fantasy,
In this hyghe arte to be intelligible,
Theyr fame encresynge evermore truely,
To slouth ever they were invincible:
To theyr wofull hertes was nought impossible;
Wyth brennyng love of insaciate fyre
Newe thynges to fynde they set theyr desyre.

For though a man of his proper mynde
Be inventife, and he do not apply
His fantasye unto the besy kynde,
Of hys connyng it maye not ratifye;
For fantasye must nedes exemplify
Hys new invencion, and cause hym to entende
Wyth hole desyre to brynge it to an ende.

And fourtely, by good estimacion
He must nombre al the hole cyrcumstaunce
Of thys mater wyth brevyacion,
That he walke not by longe continaunce
The perambulat waye, full of all variaunce.
By estimacion is made annunciate
Whether the mater be long or brevyate.

For to invention it is equipolent,
The mater founde ryght well to comprehend
In suche a space as is convenient;
For properly it doth ever pretende
Of all the purpose the length to extend:
So estimacion maye ryght well conclude
The parfyte nombre of every similitude.

And yet, than, the retentyfe memory,
Whyche is the fifte, must ever aggregate
All maters thought to retayne inwardly,
Tyll reason therof hath made a brobate,
And by scripture wyll make demonstrate
Outwardly accordynge to the thought,
To prove a reason upon a thyng of nought.

Thus, whan the fourth hath wrought full wonderly,
Then must the mynde werke upon them all,
By cours ingenious to rynne dyrectly
After theyr thoughtes, than in generall
The mynde must cause them to be memoriall;
As after this shall appere more openly,
All hole exprest by dame Phylosophy.

O thrust of vertue and of ryall pleasure
Of famous poetes many yeres ago!
O insaciate covetyse of the speciall treasure
Of new invencion, of ydernes the foo!
We may you laude, and often prayse also,
And specially for worthy causes thre,
Whiche to thys daye we may both here and se.

As to the fyrst, your hole desyre was set
Fables to fayne to eschewe ydlenes,
Wyth amplyacion more connyng to get,
By the laboure of inventyfe busynes,
Touchynge the trouthe by covert lykenes
To dysnull vyce and the vicious to blame;
Your dedes therto exemplifyde the same.

And secondly, ryght well you dyd endyte
Of the worthy actes of many a conquerour;
Through whych labour that you dyd so wryte
Unto this day reyneth the honour
Of every noble and myghty warriour,
And for your labour and your busy payne
Your fame yet lyveth, and shall endure certayne.

And eke to prayse you we are gretely bounde,
Because our connyng from you so procedeth,
For you therof were fyrst originall ground,
And upon your scripture our science ensueth.
Your splendent verses our lyghtnes renueth;
And so we ought to laude and magnify
Your excellent springes of famous poetry.

CAP. IX.

A REPLICATION AGAINST IGNORAUNT PERSONES.

Bur rude people, opprest with blyndnes,
Agaynst your fables wyll often solisgyse,
Suche is theyr mynde, such is theyr folyshnes;
For they beleve in no maner of wyse
That under a colour a trouth may aryse.
For folysh people, blynded in a matter,
Will often erre whan they of it do clatter.

O all ye cursed and such evyll fooes,
Whose syghtes be blynded over all wyth foly,
Open your eyes in the pleasaunt schooles
Of perfit connyng, or that you reply
Agaynst fables for to be contrary;
For lacke of connyng no mervayle though you erre,
In suche science, whych is from you so fer.

For now the people, whych is dull and rude,
If that you rede a fatall scripture,
And can not moralyse the semilitude
Whych to theyr wyttes is so hard and obscure,
Than wyll they say that it is sene in ure
That nought do poetes but depaynt and lye,
Deceyvvyng them by tongues of flattery.

But what for that? they can not defame
The poetes actes, whych are in effecte;
Unto them selfe remayneth the shame
To dysprayse that whych they can not correcte;
And yf that they had in it inspecte,
Than they would it prayse, and often elevate
For it should be to them so delicate.

CAP. X.

OF DISPOSITION, THE II. PARTE OF RETHORYKE.

THE second parte of crafty Rethoryke
Maye well be called Disposicion,
That doth so hyghe mater aromatyke
Adowne dystyll by consolacion;
As olde poetes make demonstracion
That Mercury, through his preeminence,
Hys natives endeth wyth famous eloquence.

By veray reason it maye ryght well appere,
That divers persons in sundry wyse delyght;
Theyr consolacions doth contrary so steere
That many myndes maye not agree aryght.
Such is the planettes of theyr course and myght.
But what for that? be it good or yll,
Them for to folowe it is at mannes fre wyl.

And dysposicion, the true seconde parte
Of rethorike, doth evermore dyrecte
The maters founde of this noble arte,
Gyvyng them place after the aspect,
And of tyme it hath the inspect,
As from a fayre parfit narracion,
Or els by stedfast argumentacion.

The whych was constitute by begynnynge,
As on the reason, and if apparaunce
Of the cause than by outwarde semyng
Be hard and difficulte in the utteraunce,
So as the mynde have no perceyveraunce,
Nor of the beginnyng can have audience,
Than must narracion begynne the sentence.

And if it be a lytle probable,
From any maner stedfast argument,
We ordre it for to be ryght stable,
And than we never begyn our sentement,
Recityng letters not convenient,
But thys commutacion shoulde be refused,
Wythout cause or thyng make it be used.

Thys that I wryte is harde and covert
To them that have nothyng intelligence;
Up so downe they make oft transvert,
Or that they can knowe, they experience
Of thys craft and facundious science,
By dysposicion the rethorician
To make lawes ordinatly began.

Wythout disposicion none ordre can be,
For the disposicion ordreth every matter,
And gyveth the place after the degre:
Wythout ordre, wythout reason we clatter,
Where is no reason it vayleth not to chatter.
Disposicion ordreth a tale directly,
In a perfit reason, to conclude truely.

The fatall problemes of olde antiquyte,
Cloked wyth myst and wyth cloudes derke,
Ordred wyth reason and hye auctorite,
The trouth dyd shewe of all theyr covert werke.
Thus have they made many a noble clerke.
To dysnull myschefe and inconvenyence,
They made our lawes wyth grete diligence.

Before the lawe, in a tumblyng barge
The people sayled, wythout parfitnes,
Throughe the worlde all about at large;
They hadde none ordre nor no stedfastnes,
Tyll rethoricians founde justyce doubtles,
Ordeynyng kynges, of ryght hye dygnite,
Of all comyns to have the soverainte;

The barge to stere, wyth lawe and justice,
Over the waves of thys lyfe transitory,
To direct wronges, and also prejudice.
And tho that wyl resyst a contrarye
Agaynst theyr kyng, by justice openly,
For theyr rebellion and evyll treason,
Shall suffer death by ryght and reason.

O what laude, glory, and greate honoure,
Unto these poetes shall be notefyed,
The whiche dystylled aromatyke lycoure
Clensynge our syght wyth ordre purifyed;
Whose famous draughtes so exemplyfyed
Set us in ordre, grace, and governaunce,
To lyve dyrectly, without encombraunce.

But many one, the whiche is rude and dull,
 Wyll dyspice theyr warke for lacke of connynge:
 All in vaine they do so hayle and pull,
 Whan they therof lacke understandinge,
 They grope over where is no felynge;
 So dull they are, that they can not fynde
 This ryall arte for to perceyve in mynde.

CAP. XI.

OF ELOCUTION, THE THIRDE PARTE OF RETHORYKE,
 WITH COLOURYNG OF SENTENCES.

AND than the iii. parte is Elocusyon,
 Whan Invencion hath the purpose wrought,
 And set it in ordre by Disposicion.
 Without this thyrde parte it vayleth ryght nought,
 Though it be founde and in ordre brought,
 Yet Elocusion with the powre of Mercury,
 The mater exorneth right well facundyously

In fewe wordes, swete and sentencious,
 Depaynted with golde harde in construction,
 To the artyke eres swete and dylycious
 The golden rethoryke is good refeccion,
 And to the reder ryght consolacion;
 As we do golde frome copper purifye
 So that Elocucion doth ryght well claryfy.

The dulcet speche from the langage rude,
Tellynge the tale in termes eloquent,
The barbarie tongue it doth ferre exclude,
Electyng words whiche are expedyent,
In Latyn or in Englyshe, after the entent
Encensyng out the aromatyke fume,
Our langage rude to exyle and consume.

But what avayleth evermore to sowe
The precyous stones amonge gruntyng hogges?
Draffe unto them is more meter I trowe.
Let an hare and swyne be amonge curre dogges;
Though to the hares were tyed grete clogges,
The gentyll beast they wyll regarde nothyng,
But to the swyne take course of rennyng.

To cloke the sentence under mysty figures,
By many colours as I make relacyon,
As the olde poetes covered theyr scriptures,
Of which the fyrste is dystribucion;
That to the evyll, for theyr abusyon,
Doth gyve payne, and, to the worthy,
Laude and prayse, them for to magnify.

Of beste or byrd they take a symylytude
Of the condycyon lyke to the party,
Feble, fayre, or yet of fortytude;
And under colour of this beste, pryvely
The morall sense they cloke full subtyly,
In prayse or dysprayse, as it is reasonable:
Of whose faynyng fyrst rose the fable.

Concludyng reason gretely profitable;
Who that theyr fables can well moralyse,
The fruytfull sentences are delectable,
Though that the ficcion they doo so devyse
Under the colour the trouth doth aryse,
Concludyng reason, rychesse, and connyng,
Pleasure, example, and also lernyng.

They fayned no fable without reason,
For reasonable is al theyr moralitie,
And upon reason was theyr conclusion,
That the comon wyt, by possibilitie,
Maye well a judge the perfyte veritie
Of theyr sentence for reason openly
To the comon wyt it doth so notify.

Rychesse.

Theyr fruitfull sentence was grete rychesse,
The whych ryght surely they myght well domyne,
For lordshyp; welth, and also noblesse;
The chaunce of fortune can some determyne.
But what for this? she can not declyne
The noble science, whiche, after povertie,
Maye bryng a man agayne to dignitie.

Scyence.

Theyr sentence is connyng, as appereth well,
For by conning theyr arte doth engendre,
And wythout connyng we knowe never a dele,
Of theyr sentence, but may sone surrendre
A true tale, that myght to us rendre
Grete pleasure, if we were intelligible
Of theyr connyng nothyng impossible.

Pleasure.

O what pleasure to the intelligent
It is to knowe and have perceyveraunce
Of theyr connyng, so much expedient,
And therof to have good utteraunce!
Redyng newe thynges of so grete pleasaunce,
Fedyng the mynd wyth foode insaciate,
The tales newe they are so delicate.

Example.

In an example, with a mysty cloud
Of covert lykenesse, the poetes do wryte;
And underneth the trouth doth so shroude,
Both good and yll, as they lyst acquyte,
With similitude they dyd so well endyte,
As I here after shall the trouth sone shew,
Of all theyr mysty and theyr fatall dewe.

The poetes fayne how that kyng Athlas
Heaven should bere upon his shoulders hye;
Because in connyng he dyd all other pas,
Especially in the hygh astronomye:
Of the vi. planettes he knewe so perfytlly
The operacions, how they were domified;
For whych poetes hym so exemplied.

And in lyke wyse, unto the Sagittary
They feyne the Centures to be of lykenesse,
As halfe man and halfe horse truly;
Because Mylyzyus wyth hys worthynesse
Dyd fyrst attame and breke the wyldenes
Of the riall stedes, and ryght swyftly
Hys men and he rode on them surely.

And also Pluto, somtyme kynge of hell;
A cyte of Grece, standyng in Thessayle,
Betwene grete rockes, as the boke doth tell,
Wherin were people wythout any fayle,
Huge, fyerse, and strong in battayle,
Tyrauntes, theves, replete with treason;
Wherefore poetes, by true comparison,

Unto the devylles, blacke and tedious,
Dyd them resemble, in terrible fygure,
For theyr mysselyvyng so foule and vycyous,
As to thys daye it doth appere in ure
Of Cerebus the defloured pycture,
The porter of hell, wyth thre heades ugly,
Lyke an horrible gyaunt fyrc and wonderly:

Because alway hys customed tyranny
Was elevate in herte by hygh presumpcion,
Thynkyng hym selfe most strong and myghty;
And secondly, he was destruction
Of many ladies by yll compulcion;
And thyrdly, his desyre insaciabie
Was to get ryches full innumerable.

Thus, for these thre vyces abhominable
They made hym wyth thre hedes serpentyne,
And like a feend his body semblable,
For his pryde, avaryce, and also rapyne.
The morall cense can soone enlummyne
The fatall pycture to be exuberaunt,
And to our syght clere, and not variaunte.

Also rehersed the cronicles of Spayne,
How redoubted Hercules by puyssaunce
Fought with an ydre, ryght grete certayne,
Having seven heades of full grete myschaunce;
For whan that he wyth all hys valiaunce
Had stryken of an head, ryght shortly,
Another anon arose ryght sodaynly.

Seven sophyms full hard and fallacyous
Thys ydre used in preposicion
Unto the people, and was full rigorous
To devoure them, where lacked responsion;
And whan one reason had conclusion,
Another reason than incontinent
Began agayne wyth subtyll argument.

For whych cause the poetes covertly
With vii. heades doth thys ydre depaynt,
For these vii. sophyms full ryght closely;
But of rude people the wyttes are so faynt,
That wyth theyr connyng they can not acquaynt,
But who that lyst theyr scyence to lerne,
Their obscure fygures he shall well decerne.

O redolent well of famous poetry,
O clere fountayne replete wyth swetenes,
Reflerynge out the dulcet delicacy
Of iiij. ryvers in mervaylous wydenesse,
Fayrer than Tygrys or yet Eufrates;
For the fyrst ryver is Understanding;
The seconde ryver Close-concluding;

The thyrd ryver is called Novelry;
The fourth ryver is called Carbuncles,
Amyddes of whom the toure is so goodly
Of Vyrgyll standeth, most solacious,
Where he is entered in stones precious;
By thys fayre toure, in a goodly grene,
Thys well doth spryng both bryght and sheen.

To understanding these iiii. accident:
Doctryne, perceyveraunce, and exercyse,
And also therto is equypolent
Evermore the perfyt practyse,
For fyrst doctryne in all goodly wyse
The perceyveraunt trowthe in hys bote of wyll
In understanding for to knowe good from yll.

So famous poetes did us endoctrine
Of the ryght way for to be intellectuall;
Theyr fables they dyd ryght so ymagyne,
That by example we may voyde the stryfe,
And wythout myschefe for to lede our lyfe,
By the advertence of theyr storyes olde,
The fruit wherof we may full well beholde

Depaynted on aras, how in antiquitie,
Dystroyed was the grete cite of Troye,
For a lytell cause, grounded on vanitie,
To mortall ruyn they tourned theyr joye.
Theyr understanding they dyd than occupy,
Nothyng prepensyng how they dyd prepare
To scourge them selfe and bryng them in a snare.

Who is opprest with a lytell wrong,
Revengyng it he may it soone encrease;
For better it is for to suffer among
An injury, as for to keepe the peace,
Than to begyne whych he shall never cease.
Warre ones begon, it is hard to know
Who shall abyde and who shall overthrowe.

The hygh power, honour, and noblenes,
Of the myghty Romaines, to whose excellence
All the wyde worlde so muche of gretenes
Unto theyr empyre was in obedience,
Suche was theyr famous porte and preemynence,
Tyll within themselfe there was a contraversy
Makyng them lese theyr worthy sygneoury.

It is ever the grounde of sapience,
Before that thou accomplysh outwardly,
For to revolve understandyng and prepençe
All in thy selfe full often inwardly,
The begynnyng and the myddle certaynly
Wyth the ende, or thou put it in ure,
And werke wyth counsell that thou mayst be sure.

And who that so doth shall never repent,
For his dede is founded on a perfytt grounde,
And for to fall it hath none impediment,
Wyth surenes it is so hygh-walled rounde.
In welth and ryches it must needes habound,
On every syde it hath suche ordinaunce
That nothyng can do it anoyauce.

Thus the poetes conclude full closely
Their fruitfull problemes for reformation,
To make us lerne to lyve directly,
Theyr good entent and true construccion,
Shewyng to us the whole affeccion
Of the way of vertue, welth, and stablenes,
And to shut the gate of myschevous entres.

And evermore they are ymaginatyfe,
Tales newe from daye to daye to fayne,
The erryng people, that are retractif,
As to the ryght way to bryng them agayne:
And who that lyst their sentence retayne,
It shall hym prouffyt yf he wyll apply
To doo therafter ful conveniently.

Carbuncles in the most derke nyght
Dothe shyne fayre wyth clere radiant beames,
Exylyng derkenes wyth his rayes lyght;
And so these poetes, with theyr golden streames,
Devoyde our rudenes wyth grete fyry lemes;
Theyr centencious verses are refulgent
Encensyng out the odour redolent.

And is theyr worke also extynguyshible?
Nay, truely, for it doth shyne ryght cleere
Through cloudes derke unto the odyble,
To whom truely it may nothyng appeere
Where connyng fayleth, the scyence so deere
Ignoraunce hateth wyth fervent envy,
And unto connyng is mortall ennemy.

O ygnoraunce, wyth slouth so opprest,
Open thy curtayne, so ryght dymme and derke,
And evermore remembre the behest
Of thy labour to understande thy werke,
Of many a noble and ryght famous clerke.
Fy upon slouth, the nourysher of vyce,
Whych unto youth doth often prejudice.

Who in youth lyst nothyng to lerne,
He wyl repent hym often in hys age,
That he the connyng can nothyng decerne;
Therefore now youth, with lusty courage,
Rule thy fleshe and thy slouth aswage,
And in thy youth the scyence engender
That in thyne age it may the worship render.

Connyng is lyght and also pleasaunt,
A gentyll burden wythout grevousnes,
Unto hym that is ryght well applyaunt
For to bere it wyth al his besenes;
He shal attaste the well of frutefulness,
Which Vyrgyl claryfied, and also Tullyus,
Wyth Latyn pure, swete, and delicyous.

From whense my mayster Lydgate veryfyde
The depured rethoryke in Englysh language;
To make our tongue so clerely purifyed,
That the vyle termes should nothing arage
As like a pye to chatter in a cage,
But for to speke wyth rethoryke formally,
In the good order, wythouten vylany.

And who his bokes lyst to here or se,
In them he shall fynd elocucion,
With as good order as any may be,
Kepying ful close the moralyzacyon
Of the trouth of his great intencion,
Whose name is registred in remembraunce
For to endure by longe contynuaunce.

Nowe after this, for to make relacyon
Of famous rethoryke so in this party,
As to the fourth part, Pronouncyacyon,
I shal it shew anone ryght openly,
Wyth many braunches of it sykerly;
And how it taketh the hole effect
In every place, degre, and aspecte.

CAP. XII.

OF PRONUNCIATION, THE IV. PART OF RETHORIKE.

WHAN the matter is founde by invencion,
Be it mery or yet of grete sadnes,
Sette in a place by the disposycyon,
And by elocucyons famous clerenes
Exornate well and redy to expres,
Then pronouncyacyon, wyth chere and countenance,
Convenyently must make the utteraunce.

Wyth humble voyce and also moderate,
Accordynge as by hym is audyence,
And if there be a ryght hye estate,
Then under honour and obedyence
Reasonably done unto his excellence,
Pronouncynge his matter so facundious,
In all due maner to be centencyous.

For though a matter be never so good,
Yf it be tolde wyth tongue of barbary,
In rude maner wythout the discrete mode,
It is distourbance to a hole company
For to se them so rude and boystously
Demeane them selfe, utterynge the sentence
Wythout good maner or yet intellygence.

It is a thinge ryght greatly convenable
To pronounce the matter as it is convenient,
And to the herers ryght delectable,
Whan the utterer, wythout impediment,
Wyth ryght good maner, countenaunce, and entent
Dothe his tale unto them trectably,
Kepyng his maner and voyce full moderately.

This is the costome that the poetes use,
To tel theyr tale with al due circumstance,
The vylayne courage they do much refuse
That is boystous and rude of governaunce,
And evermore they do to them avaunce
Nurture, maner, and al gentylnes.
In their behavyng wyth all semelynes.

And thus the gentyl rethoricyan,
Through the labour of his ryal clergy,
The famous nurture originally began
Oppressynge our rudenes and our foly,
And for to governe us ryght prudently,
The good maner encreaseth dignitie,
And the rudenes also iniquitie.

The famous poete who so lyst to here,
To tell this tale it is solacyous,
Beholdyng hys maners and also hys chere
After the maner be it sad or joyous.
Yf it be sad, his chere is dolorus,
As in bewaylyng a woful tragedy
That worthy is to be in memory.

And if the matter be joyfull and glad,
Lyke countenance outwardly they make;
But moderacyon in theyr myndes is had,
So that outrage may them not overtake.
I can not wryte to mucche for theyr sake,
Them to laude, for my tyme is shorte
And the matter longe which I must reporte.

CAP. XIII.

OF MEMORY, THE V. PART OF RETHORYKE.

AND the v. parte is than memoratyfe,
The whiche the perfyte mynystracyon
Ordinately causeth to be retentyfe,
Dryving the tale to good conclusyon;
For it behoveth to have respeccyon
Unto the tale, and the veray grounde
And on what ymage he his matter found.

If to the oratour many a sundry tale,
One after other, treatably be tolde,
Than sundry ymages in his closed male
Eche for a mater he doth than well holde,
Lyke to the tale he doth than so beholde,
And inwarde a recapitulacyon,
Of eche ymage the moralazacyon.

Whiche be the tales he grounded pryvely
Upon these ymages significacyon,
And whan tyme is for him to specify
All his tales by demonstracion,
In due order, maner and reason,
Than eche ymage inwarde dyrectly
The oratour doth take full properly.

So is enprynted in his propre mynde
Every tale wyth hole resemblaunce.
By this ymage he doth his mater fynde,
Eche after other wythouten varyaunce.
Who to this arte wyl gyve attendaunce,
As therof to knowe the perfytenes,
In the poetes scole he must have intres.

Than shal he knowe, by perfyte study,
The memorial arte of rethoryke defuse,
It shal to him so wel exemplefy,
If that him lyst, the scyence to use;
Though at the fyrste it be to hym obtuse,
With exercyse he shal it well augment,
Under cloudes derke and termes eloquent.

But nowadayes the synne of avaryce
Exyleth the mynde and the hole delyght,
To coveyt connyng, which is gret prejudice,
For insacyatly so blynded is theyr syght
Wyth the sylver and the golde so bryght,
They nothing thynke on fortune variable,
Whyche al theyr ryches shal make transmutable.

The olde sawes they ryght clene abject,
Whych for our lernyng the poetes dyd wryte;
With avaryce they arose so sore infect,
They take no hede nothyng they wryte,
Whyche morally dyd so nobly endyte,
Reprovyng vyce, praysyng the vertue,
Whiche idelnes dyd evermore eschewe.

Nowe wyl I cease of lusty rethoryke;
 I may not tary, for my tyme is short;
 For I must procede, and shew of Arismetrik
 With divers nombres which I must reporte.
 Hope inwardly doth me wel comforte,
 To brynge my boke unto a fynyshment,
 Of al my matter and my true entent.

CAP. XIV.

A COMMENDATION OF GOWER, CHAUCER, AND LYDGATE.

O THOUGHTFUL herte, tombled all aboute
 Upon the se of stormy ignoraunce,
 For to sayle forthe thou arte in grete doute,
 Over the waves of grete encombraunce;
 Wythout ony comforte, saufe of esperaunce,
 Whiche the exhorteth hardely to sayle
 Unto thy purpose wyth diligent travayle.

Afrycus, Auster bloweth frowardly,
 Towarde the lande and habitacyon
 Of thy wel faverde and moost fayre lady,
 For whose sake and delectacyon
 Thou hast take this occupacyon,
 Principally ryght well to attayne
 Her swete rewarde for thy besy payne.

O pensyfe herte, in the stormy pery
Mercury northwest thou mayst se appere,
After tempest to glad thyne emespery;
Hoyse up thy sayle, for thou must drawe nere
Towarde the ende of thy purpose so clere,
Remembre the of the trace and daunce
Of poetes olde wyth all the purveyaunce.

As morall Gower, whose sentencyous dewe
Adowne refflayreth with fayre golden bemes,
And after Chaucers all abroad doth shewe,
Our vyces to clense; his depared stremes
Kyndlynge our hertes wyth the fyry lemes
Of moral vertue, as is probable
In all hys bokes so swete and profytable.

The boke of fame, which is sentencyous,
He drewe hym selfe on hys own invencion;
And than the tragidydes so pytous
Of the xix. ladyes, was his translacyon;
And upon hys ymaginacyon
He made also the tales of Caunterbury;
Some vertuous, and some glad and mery.

And of Troylus the pytous dolour
For his lady Cresyde, full of doublenes,
He did bewayle ful well the langoure,
Of all hys love and grete unhappines.
And many other bokes doubtles
He dyd compyle, whose godly name
In printed bokes doth remayne in fame.

And, after him, my mayster Lydgate,
The monke of Bury, dyd hym wel apply
Both to contrive and eke to translate;
And of vertue ever in especyally,
For he dyd compyle than full nyally
Of our blessed lady the conversacion,
Saint Edmundes life martred with treson.

Of the fall of prynces, ryght wofully
He did endyte in all piteous wyse,
Folowyng his auctoure Bocas rufully;
A ryght greate boke he did truly compryse,
A good ensample for us to dispyse
This worlde, so ful of mutabylite,
In whiche no man can have a certente.

And thre reasons ryght greatly profytable
Under coloure he clokod craftely;
And of the chorle he made the fable
That shutte the byrde in a cage so closely,
The pamflete sheweth it expressely;
He fayned also the courte of Sapyence,
And translated wyth al his dylygence

The grete boke of the last destruccyon
Of the cyte of Troye, whylome so famous,
How for woman was the confusyon;
And betwene vertue and the lyfe vycyous
Of goddes and goddes, a boke solacyous
He did compyle, and the tyme to passe,
Of love he made the bryght temple of glasse.

Were not these thre gretly to commende,
Whyche them applyed such bokes to contriue,
Whose famous draughtes no man can amende?
The synne of slouth they dyd from them dryve,
After theyr death for to abyde on lyve
In worthy fame by many a nacyon,
Their bokes theyr actes do make relacyon.

O mayster Lydgate, the most dulcet sprynge
Of famous rethoryke, wyth balade ryall,
The chefe orygynall of my lernyng,
What vayleth it on you for to call
Me for to ayde, now in especiall;
Sythen your body is now wrapte in chest,
I pray God to gyve your soule good rest.

O what losse is it of suche a one!
It is to grete truely me for to tell;
Sythen the tyme that his lyfe was gone,
In al this realme his pere did not dwell;
Above al other he did so excell,
None sith his time in arte wolde succede,
After their death to have fame for their mede.

But many a one is ryght well experte
In this connyng, but upon auctoryte,
They fayne no fables pleasaunt and covert,
But spende theyr time in vaynful vanyte,
Makyng balades of fervent amyte.
As gestes and tryfles wythout frutefulness;
Thus al in vayne they spende their besynes.

I, lytell or nought expert in poetry,
 Of my mayster Lydgate wyll folowe the trace,
 As evermore so his name to magnify
 Wyth suche lytle bokes, by Goddes grace,
 If in this worlde I may have the space;
 The lytell connyng that his grace me sente
 In tyme amonge in suche wyse shall be spent.

And yet nothings upon presumpcyon
 My mayster Lydgate I wyll not envy,
 But all onely is mine entencyon
 With suche labour my selfe to occupy;
 As whyte by blacke doth shyne more clerely,
 So shal theyr matters appeare more pleasaunt
 Besyde my draughtes rude and ignoraunt.

CAP. XV.

OF ARSMETRIKE.

Now in my boke ferder to procede;
 To a chambre I went, replete wyth rychesse,
 Where sat Arysmatryke in a golden wede,
 Lyke a lady pure and of great worthynes.
 The walles about dyd full well expres,
 With golde depaynted, every perfyte nombre,
 To adde, detraye, and to devyde asonder.

The rofe was paynted with golden beames,
The wyndowes cristall clerely claryfyde,
The golden rayes and depured streames
Of radyant Phebus that was purifyde
Right in the Bull, that tyme so domysyde,
Through windowes was resplendyschaunt
About the chambre fayre and radyaunt.

I kneled downe right soone on my kne,
And to her I sayd: O lady marveylous,
I right humbly beseche your majeste
Your arte to shewe me so facundyous,
Whyche is defuse and right fallacyous;
But I shall so apply myne exercyse,
That the vary trouth I shall well devyse.

My scyence, said she, is right necessary,
And in the myddes of the scyences all
It is now sette right well and parfytely;
For unto them it is so specyall,
Nombrynge so theyr werkes in generall,
Wythout me they had no parfytenes,
I must them nombre alwayes doubteles.

Without nombre is no maner of thyng,
That in our sight we may well se;
For God made all the begynnynge
In nombre perfyte well in certaynte,
Who knewe arsmetryke in every degre,
All maner nombre in his minde were had,
Bothe to detraye and to devyde and adde.

But who wyl knowe all the experience,
It behoveth hym to have great lernynge
In many thinges, wyth true intelligence,
Or that he can have perfyte rekenynge
In every nombre by expert connynge.
To reherse in Englysshe more of this science,
It were foly and the great neclygence.

I thought full longe, till I had a syght
Of La Bell Pucell, the most fayre ladye;
My minde upon her was bothe day and nyght,
The fervent love so perst me inwardly,
Wherefore I went anone right shortly
Unto the toure swete and melodyous,
Of dame Musyke so gaye and glorious.

CAP. XVI.

OF MUSIKE: MUNDAIN, HUMAYN, AND INSTRUMENTAL.

WHAN splendent Phebus, in his midday spere,
Was hyght in Gemine in the fresshe season
Of lusty Maye, with golden beames clere,
And derke Diane made declynacion;
Whan Flora florissed in this nacion,
I called to mynde right inwardly
The reporte of Fame so muche ententifly

Of La Bell Pucell in the toure musycall,
And ryght anone unto the toure I went;
Where I sawe a temple made of christal,
In whiche Musyke, the lady excellent,
Played on base organs expedient,
Accordyng well unto dyopason,
Dyapenthe, and eke dyetesseron.

In this temple was great solempnyte,
And of muche people there was great prease;
I loked about whether I coude se
La Bell Pucell, my langour to cease;
I coude not se her; my payne dyd encrease,
Tyl that I spyed her above, in a vaute,
Whiche to my hert did make so sore assaute,

Wyth her beaute clere and swete countenaunce,
The stroke of love I coulde nothyng resyste:
And anone, wythout lenger cyrcumstaunce,
To her I wente, or that her person wyste;
Her thought I knewe not, she thought as she lyst;
By her I stode, with herte sore and faynte,
And dyd my selfe wyth her sone acquaynt.

The comyn wyt dyd full lytell regarde
Of dame Musyke the dulcet armony;
The eres herde not, for the mynde inwarde
Venus had rapte and taken fervently:
Imaginacion wrought full prively.
The fantasy gave perfyte jugement
Alway to her for to be obedyent.

By estymacion muche doubtfully I cast
Whether I should by long tyme and space
Atteyne her, or els to love in wast.
My herte sobbed and quaked in this case;
I stode by her ryght nere in the place,
Wyth many other fayre ladyes also,
But so fayre as she I never sawe no mo.

The feste done, dame Musyke dyd go;
She folowed after, and she wolde not tary.
Fare well, she sayde, for I must parte you fro.
Alas! thought I, that fortune doth so vary;
My sadde body my hevy hert did cary;
I coude not speke, my herte was nere broken,
But wyth my head I made her a token.

Whan she was gone, inwardly than wrought
Upon her beaute my mynde retentyfe;
Her goodly fygure I graved in my thought;
Except her selfe all were expulcyfe;
My mynde to her was so ententyfe,
That I folowed her into a temple ferre,
Replete wyth joy, as bryght as any sterre;

Where dulcet Flora her aromatyke dewe
In the fayre temple adowne dyd dystyll,
All abrode the fayre dropes dyd shewe,
Encensynge out all the vapours yll;
With suche a swetenes Flora dyd fulfyll
All the temple, that my gowne well shewed
The lycoure swete of the droppes endewed.

And so to a chambre full solacyous
Dame Musyke wente wyth La Bell Pucell;
All of jasper, wyth stones precyous,
The rofe was wrought, curyously and well;
The wyndowes glased marvaylously to tell.
With cloth of tyssue in the rychest maner
The walles were hanged hye and cyrculer.

There sat dame Musyke, with all her mynstrasy;
As tabours, trumpettes, with pipes melodious,
Sakbutes, organs, and the recorder swetely,
Harpes, lutes, and crouddes ryght delycyous;
Cymphans, doussemers, wyth claricimbales glorious.
Rebeckes, clarycordes, eche in theyr degre,
Dyd sytte aboute theyr ladyes mageste.

Before dame Musike I dyd knele adowne,
Saying to her: O fayre lady plesaunt,
Your prudence reyneth most hye in renowne,
For you be ever ryght concordant
With perfyte reason, whiche is not variaunt;
I beseche your grace, with all my diligence,
To instructe me in your noble science.

It is, she sayde, right gretely proffitable;
For musike doth sette in all unyte
The discorde thynges whiche are variable
And devoydeth myschiefe and greate iniquite.
Where lacketh musyke there is no pleynte;
For musyke is concorde and also peace,
Nothyng without musyke may well encrease.

The vii. scyences in one monacorde,
Eche upon other do full well depende;
Musyke hath them so set in concorde,
That all in one may right well extende.
All perfite reason they do so comprehend,
That theyr waye and perfite doctryne
To the joye above, whiche is celestine.

And yet also the perfite physyke,
Which appertayneth well to the body,
Doth well resemble unto the musyke,
Whan the inwardc intrayles tourneth contrary,
That nature can not worke dyrectly;
Then doth physike the partes interiall
In ordre set to their originall.

But yet physyke can not be lyberall
As the vii. science by good auctorite,
Which ledeth the soule the way in specyall
By good doctrine to dame Eternite;
Onely of phisike it is the properte
To ayde the body in every sekenes,
That is right frayle and full of bryttilnes.

And because phisyke is appendaunt
Unto the body by helpe of medecyne,
And to the soule nothing approtenaunt,
To cause the body for to enclyne
In eternal helth so the soule to domyne,
For to the body the science seven
Doth teche to lede the soule to heven.

And musike selfe is melodious
To rejoyce the yeres and comfort the brayne,
Sharping the wittes with sounde solacious,
Devoydyng bad thoughtes whiche dyd remayne,
It gladdeth the herte also well certayne;
Lengthe the lyfe with dulcet armony,
As is good recreacion after study.

She commaunded her mynstrelles right anone to play
Mamours the swete and the gentill daunce;
With La Bell Pucell, that was fayre and gaye,
She me recommaunded, with all pleasaunce,
To daunce true mesures without varyaunce.
O Lorde God! how glad than was I,
So for to daunce with my swete lady.

By her propre hande, soft as any sylke,
With due obeysaunce I dyd her then take;
Her skynne was white as whales bone or mylke.
My thought was ravysshed, I might not aslake
My brennyng hert, she the fyre dyd make;
These daunces truely musyke hath me tought
To lute or daunce, but it awayleth nought:

For the fyre kyndled, and waxed more and more,
The dauncynge blewe it, wyth her beaute clere,
My hert sekened and began to waxe sore;
A mynute vi. houres, and vi. houres a yere
I thought it was, so hevy was my chere;
But yet for cover my great love aryght,
The outwarde countenaunce I made glad and light.

And for fere myne eyes should my hert bewray,
I toke my leve and to a temple wente,
And all alone I to my selfe dyd saye:
Alas! what fortune hath me hyther sente,
To devoyde my joye and my hert torment;
No man can tell howe great payne it is,
But yf he wyll fele it, as I do ywys.

Alas! O lady, how cruell arte thou,
Of pyteous doloure for to buylde a nest
In my true hert, as thou dost ryght nowe!
Yet of all ladyes I must love the best;
Thy beaute therto dyd me sure arest.
Alas, wyth love, whan that it doth the please,
Thou mayest cease my care and my payne sone ease.

Alas! how sore maye I nowe bewayle
The pyteous chaunce whyche did me happe;
My ladyes lokes dyd me so assayle,
That sodaynly my herte was in a trap
By Venus caught, and wyth so sore a clap,
That through the greate stroke did perse:
Alas for wo I could not reverse!

Farewel all joye and al perfyte pleasure!
Fare wel my luste and my lykyng!
For wo is comen wyth me to endure;
Now must I lede my lyfe in mornynge;
I may not lute, or yet daunce or synge!
O! La Bel Pucel, my lady glorious;
You are the cause that I am so dolorous.

Alas! fayre lady, and myne owne swete herte,
Wyth my servyce I yelde me to your wyl,
You have me fettered; I may not asterte;
At your pleasure ye may me save or kyll;
Bicause I love you, wyl you me spyl?
Alas! it were a pyteous case in dede,
That you wyth deth should rewarde my mede.

A, a! that I am ryght wo bygone,
For I of love dare not to you speke,
For feare of nay, that may encrease my mone;
A nay of you myght cause my herte to breke.
Alas! I wretche and yet unhappy peke
Into suche trouble, misery, and thought:
With sight of you I am into it brought.

And to my selfe as I made complainte,
I espyed a man ryght nere me beforne,
Whyche right anone dyd wyth me acquaynt.
Me thynke, he sayde, that ye are nere forlorne,
Wyth inwarde payne that your heart hath borne.
Be not to pensyfe; call to mynde agayne
How of one sorowe ye do now make twayne.

Myne inwarde sorowe ye begyn to double;
Go your waye, quod I, for ye can not me ayde.
Tell me, he sayde, the cause of my trouble,
And of my wo be nothyng afraide.
Me thynke that sorowe hath you overlayde:
Dryve of no lenger, but tell me your mynde,
It may me happe a remedy to fynde.

A, a! quod I, it vayleth not your speche,
I wyll wyth you never have medlynge.
Let me alone, the most unhappy wretche
Of all the wretches that is yet lyvyng.
Suche is the chaunce of my bewaylyng;
Go on your waye, you are nothyng the better
To me to speke to make the sorowe gretur.

Forsoth, he sayd, remembre thynges thre;
The fyrst is, that ye may sorowe longe
Unto your selfe or that ye ayeded be:
And secondly, in great paynes stronge,
To muse alone it myght turne you to wronge:
The thyrde is, it myght you wel ease truely
To tel your mynde to a frende ryght trusty.

It is a jewel of a frende of trust,
As at your nede to tell your secretenes
Of all your payne and fervent lust.
His counseyle soone may helpe and redres
Your payneful wo and mortall heavynes;
Alone is nought for to thynke and muse,
Therefore, good sonne, do me not refuse.

And syth that you are plunged all in thought,
Beware the pyt of dolorus dispayre;
So to complayne it vayleth you ryght nought.
It may so fortune ye love a lady fayre,
Whych to love you wyl nothyng repayre;
Or els ye have lost great londe or substaunce,
By fatall chaunge of fortunes ordinaunce.

Tell me the cause, though that it be so,
In cause you love I knowe it by experience,
It is a payne engendryng great wo,
And hard it is for to make resystence
Agaynst suche love of fervent vyolence.
The love is dredefull, but nevertheles
There is no sore nor yet no sykenes,

But there is a salve and remedy therfore;
So for your payne and your sorowe great
Councell is medicine, which may you restore
Unto your desyre wythout any let,
Yf ye wyll tell me where your herte is set.
In the chayre of sorowe no great doubt it is
To fynde a remedy for your payne, ywys.

A physycyen, truely, can lyttel descerne
Ony maner sekenes wythout syght of uryne;
No more can I by good counsell you lerne
All suche wofull trouble for to determyne.
But yf you mekely wyl to me enclyne,
To tell the cause of your great hevynesse,
Of your inwarde trouble and woful sadnes.

Than I began with all my diligence
To here him speke so grounded on reason,
And in my minde did make advertence.
Howe it was holsome, in tribulation,
To save a good and a trewe companion;
For to know my sorow and woful grefe,
It myght me comforte and ryght wel relefe.

And of him, than, I asked this question:
What was his name I prayd him to tel?
Counseyl, quod he; the which solucion
In my woful mynde whiche I like ryght wel.
And pryvely I did his lesson spel,
Sayeng to him, my chance and desteny
Of al other is the moste unhappy.

Why so? quod he; though fortune be straunge,
To you a whyle turnyng of her face,
Her louring chere she may ryght sone chaunge,
And you excepte and cal unto her grace.
Dyspayre you not, for in good tyme and space
Nothyng there is but wysdom may it wynde,
To tell your mynde I praye you to begynne.

Unto you, quod I, wyth al my hole assent
I wyl tell you trouthe, and you wyl not bewray
Unto none other my mater and entent.
Nay, nay, quod he, you shall not se that day;
Your hole affyaunce and trust ye well ye may
Into me put, for I shall not vary,
But kepe your counsell as a secretary.

And than to hym, in the maner folowyng,
I did complayne, wyth syghing teres depe:
Alas! quod I, you shall have knowledgyng
Of my hevvy chaunce that causeth me to wepe;
So wo I am, that I can never slepe,
But walowe and tumble in the trappe of care;
My heart was caught or that I was ware.

It happened so that in a temple olde,
By the toure of Musyke at great solemnyte,
La Bell Pucell I dyd ryght well beholde,
Whose beaute clere and great humilite
To my heart dyd cast the darte of amyte;
After whyche stroke so harde and farvent,
To her excellence I came incontinent.

Beholdyng her chere and lovely countenaunce,
Her garmentes ryche and her propre stature,
I regestered well in my remembraunce
That I never sawe so fayre a creature,
So well favoured create by nature;
That harde it is for to wryte wyth yncke
All the beaute, or any hert to thynke.

Fayrer she was than was quene Elyne,
Proserpyne, Cresyde, or yet Ypolyte,
Medea, Dydo, or yonge Poleyxine,
Alcumena, or quene Menelape;
Or yet dame Rosamunde; in certaynte,
None of all these can have the premynence.

Duryng the feest I stode her nere by,
But than hir beaute encreased my payne;
I coude nothyng resyst the contrary;
She wrapt my herte in a brennyng chayne.
To the musycall toure she went than agayne;
I wente after, I roud not behynde.
The chayne she haled whych my heart dyd bynde,

Tyl that we came into a chamber gaye,
Where that Musyke, wyth all her minstralsy,
Dyvers base daunces moost swetely dyd playe,
That them to here it was great melody;
And dame Musyke commaunded curteysly
La Bell Pucell wyth me than to daunce,
Whome that I toke wyth all my pleasaunce

By her swete honde, begynnyng the trace,
And longe dyd daunce tyl that I myght not hyde
The paynfull love whyche dyd my heart embrace;
Bycause wherof I toke my leve that tyde,
And to thys temple where I do abyde
Forthe than I went, alone to bewayle
My mortall sorowe wythout any fayle.

Now have I tolde you all the veray trouthe
Of my wofull chaunce aud great unhappynesse.
I praye you nothyng wyth me to be wrothe,
Whyche am drouned in carefull wretchednesse,
By fortune plunged ful of doublenes.
A, a! said Counseyle, doubte ye never a dele,
But your disease I shal by wysdome hele.

Remember yet, that never yet was he,
That in this worlde dyd lede all his lyfe
In joye and pleasure, wythout adversyte;
No worldely thyng can be wythout stryfe,
For unto pleasure payne is affyrmatyfe.
Who wyll have pleasure he must fyrst apply
To take the payne wyth hys cure besely.

To serve the joye whych after death ensue,
Rewardyng payne for the great businesse,
No doubte your lady wyl upon you rue,
Seing you apply all your gentylnes
To do her pleasure and servyce doubtles.
Harde is the heart that no love hath felt.
Nor for to love wyl than encline and melt.

Remember ye that in olde antiquyte
Howe worthy Troylus, that mighty champion,
What paine he suffered by great extremyte
Of fervent love, by a great longe ceason,
For his lady Cresyde, by great tribulacyon.
After his sorowe had not he great joye
Of hys lady, the fayrest of all Troye?

And the famous knyght yclepped Ponthus,
Whych loved Sydoyne so muche entyerly,
What payne had he and what care dolorus
For his lady wyth love so marvaylously,
Was not her heart wounded ryght wofully?
After hys payne his ladie dyd her cure,
To do him joye, honoure, and pleasure.

Who was wyth love more wofully arayed,
Than were these twayne, and many other mo?
The power of love hath them so asayde,
That, and I lyst, I coude now reherse also
To whom true love hath wrought mykel wo,
And at the ende have had their desyre,
Of al their sorow for to quenche the fyre.

Languysshē no more, but plucke up thyne herte,
Exyle dyspayre, and live a whyle in hope;
And kepe your love all close and coverte;
It may so fortune that your lady grope
Somwhat of love for to drynke a slope;
Though outwardly she dare not let you know,
But at the last, as I beleve and trowe,

She can not kepe it so prively and close,
But that somewhat to you it shal appere,
By countenaunce, how that her love arose.
If that she love you, the love is so dere,
Whan you come to her she wyl make you chere
With countenaunce, accordyng unto love,
Full pryvely for to come to her above.

Sendyng of love the messenger before,
Which is her eyes, with lovely lokes swete,
For to beholde you than ever more and more,
After the tyme that you together mete.
With lovyng wordes she wyl you than grete.
Sorow no more, for I thynke in my mynde
That at the last she wyl be good and kynd.

Alas! quod I, she is of hye degre,
Borne to great land, treasure, and substaunce:
I fere to sore I shal disdayned be,
The whych wyl trouble al my grevaunce.
Her beaute is the cause of my penaunce:
I have no great lande, treasure, nor ryches,
To wynde the favour of her noblenes.

What thoughe? quod he, draw you not abacke,
For she hath inough in her possession
For you both; for you shal never lacke
If that ye order it by good reason;
And so, in perfite consyderacyon,
She wyll wyth love her grene flouryng age
Passe forth in joye, pleasure, and courage.

Youth is alway of the course ryght lyght,
Hote, and moyste, and full of lustines,
Moost of the ayre it is ruled by ryght,
And her complexion hath chefe intres
Upon sanguyn, the ayres holsomnes.
She is not yet in al above xviii. yere;
Of tender age, to pleasure most dere.

Golde, or sylver, in any maner of wyse,
For sanguyne youth it is al contrary;
So for to coveyte for it, doth aryse
Onely engendred upon the melancoly,
Whych is drye, colde, and also erthely,
In which the golde is truely nutryfyde,
• Ferre frome the ayre so clerely purifyed.

Thus covetyse shal nothyng surmount
Your yonge ladyes herte; but onely nature
Shal in her mynde make her to account
The great losse of youth, her specyal treasure.
She knoweth she is a ryght fayre creature,
No doubte it is but ye pryvely amonge,
So hye is nature wyth his werkes stronge.

That she of force the mannes company
Must well conveyte; for she may not resyste
Dame natures werke, which is so secretely.
Thoughe she be mayde, let her say what she lyst,
She wolde have man, though do man it wylt
To make her joye whan nature doth agre,
Her thought is hers, it is unto her fre.

Who spareth to speke he spareth to spede;
I shall provyde for you conyenient
A gentyl tyme for to attayne your mede,
That you shall go to your lady excellent;
And ryght before take good advysement
Of all the matter that ye wyl her shewe,
Upon good reason and in wordes fewe.

Thus past we tyme in communicacyon,
The after none wyth many a sentement,
And what for love was best conclusyon
We demed oft and gave judgement;
Tyll that in the even was refulgent
Fayre golden Mercury, wyth hys bemes bryght,
About the ayre castinge his pured lyght.

Then to a chambre swete and precyous,
Councell me ledde, for to take my reste.
The night was wete, and also tenebrous;
But I my selfe, with sorowe opprest,
Dyd often muse what was for me best
Unto my fayre lady for to tell or saye,
And all my drede was for fere of a naye.

Though that my bedde was easy and softe,
Yet dyd I tomble, I myght not lye styll;
On every syde I tourned me ful ofte,
Upon the love I had so set my wyll,
Longynge ryght sore my mynde to fulfyll,
I called Counseyle, and prayed hym to awake
To gyve me counseyle what were best to take.

Ha, ha! quod he, love doth you so prykke,
That yet your heart will nothyng be eased,
But evermore be feble and sycke,
Tyll that your lady hath it well appesed;
Thoughe ye thynke longe, yet ye shall be plesed.
I wolde, quod I, that it were as ye say.
Fye, fye, quod he, dryve suche dyspayre away,

And lyve in hope, whych shall do you good.
Joy cometh after, whan the payne is past.
Be ye pacyent and sobre in mode;
To wepe and wayle all is for you in wast:
Was never payne, but it had joye at last.
In the fayre morrow, ryse and make you redy,
At ix. at the clocke, the time is necessary

For us to walke unto your lady gent;
The bodyes above be than well domysyde
To helpe us forwarde without ympediment.
Loke what ye saye; loke it be deryfyde
Frome perfyte reason well exemplyfyde;
Forsake her not, thoughe that she say naye,
A womans guyse is evermore to delaye.

No castell can be of so great a strength,
If that there be a sure syege to it layde,
It must yelde up or els be wonne at length,
Though that tofore it hath bene longe delayde.
So continuance may you ryght wel ayde.
Some womans herte can not so harded be,
But besy labour may make it agre.

Labour and dylygence is full mervaylus,
Whych bryngeth a lover to his promocyon.
Nothyng to love is more desyrus
Than instant labour and delectacyon:
The harded harte it geveth occasyon
For to consider how that her servaunt
To obtayne her love is so attendaunt.

Thus al in comonyng we the nyght did passe,
Tyll in the ayre wyth clowdes fayre and red
Rysyn was Phebus, shynyng in the glasse,
In the chamber his golden rayes were spred,
And Dyane derlyng pale as any leade,
Whan the lytle byrdes swetely dyd syng
With tunes musicall in the fayre mornyng.

CAP. XVIII.

OF THE DOLOROUS AND LOWLY DISPUTACION BETWENE
LA BEL PUCELL AND GRAUNDAMOURE.

COUNCELL and I than rose ful quickly
And made us redy on her way to walke,
In our clenly wede apparayled properly.
What I wolde saye I dyd unto hym talke,
Tyl on his boke he began to calke
How the sonne entred was in Gemyne;
And eke Dyane, ful of mutabilite,

Entred the Crab, her propre mancyon,
Than ryght amyddes of the Dragons hed;
And Venus and she made conjuncyon.
Frome the combust way she had her so sped,
She had no let that was to be dredde,
The assured ayre was depaynted clere
With golden beames of fayre Phebus spere.

Than forth so went good Counsell and I,
At vi. a clocke, unto a garden fayre;
By Musykes toure walked most goodly,
Where La Bell Pucell used to repayre
In the swete mornyng for to take the ayre
Among the floures of aromatyke fume,
The mysty ayre to exyle and consume.

And at the gate we met the portresse,
That was right gentill, and called Curteysy,
Whych salved us wyth wordes of mekenesse,
And axed us the veraye cause and why
Of our comyng to the gardeine sothel?
Truly, saide we, for nothyng but well,
A lytel to speke with La Bell Pucell.

Truly, quod she, in the garden grene
Of many a swete and sundry floure
She maketh a garlonde that is veray shene;
Wyth true loves wrought in many a coloure,
Replete with swetenes and dulcet odoure;
And all alone, wythout company,
Amyddes an herber she sitteth plesauntly.

Nowe stande you styl for a lytle space,
I wyll let her of you have knowledgyng.
And ryght anone she went to her grace,
Tellyng her than how we were comyng,
To speke wyth her gretly desyryng.
Truly, she sayd, I am right well content
Of theyr comyng to know the hole entent.

Then good Curteysy, wythout taryenge,
Came unto us wyth all her diligence,
Prayeng us to take our entryng
And come unto the ladies precence,
To tell your erande to her excellence.
Than in we wente to the garden glorious,
Lyke to a place of pleasure most solacyous.

Wyth Flora paynted and wrought curiously,
In divers knottes of marvaylous gretenes;
Rampane lyons stode up wondersly,
Made all of herbes with dulcet swetenes,
Wyth many dragons of marvaylos likenes,
Of dyvers floures made ful craftely,
By Flora couloured wyth colours sundry.

Amiddes the garden so moche delectable
There was an herber fayre and quadrante,
To paradyse right well comparable,
Set all about with flours fragraunt;
And in the myddle there was resplendyschaunte
A dulcet spring and marvaylous fountaine,
Of golde and asure made all certaine.

In wonderfull and curious similitude
There stode a dragon, of fyne golde so pure,
Upon his tayle of myghty fortitude,
Wretched and skaled al wyth asure,
Havyng thre hedes divers in fygure,
Whych in a bathe of the sylver grette
Spouted the water that was so dulcette.

Besyde whiche fountayne, the moost fayre lady
La Bel Pucel was gayly syttyng;
Of many floures fayre and ryally
A goodly chaplet she was in makynge.
Her heer was downe so clerely shynyng,
Lyke to the golde late purified with fyre,
Her heer was bryght as the drawne wyre.

Lyke to a lady for to be moost trewe,
She ware a fayre and goodly garment,
Of most fyne velvet, al of Indy blewe,
Wyth armynes powdred bordred at the vent.
On her fayre handes, as was convenient,
A payre of gloves ryght sclender and softe.
In approchyng nere I did beholde her oft.

And whan that I came before her presence,
Unto the ground I dyd knele adowne;
Sayeng: O lady! moost fayre of excellence,
O stere so clere of vertuous renowne!
Whose beaute fayre in every realme and towne,
Indued wyth grace and also wyth goodnes,
Dame Fame the her selfe doth evermore expresse.

Amoure.

Please it your grace for to gyve audyence
Unto my wofull and pitous complaynte;
How fervent love, wythout resystence,
My careful herte hath made low and faynte,
And you therof are the hole constraunt;
Your beauty truly hath me fettered faste,
Wythout your helpe my life is nere hand paste.

Pucell.

Stande up, quod she; I marvayle of this cace,
What sodayne love hath you so arayde
Wyth so great payne your heart to embrace?
And why for me ye should be so dismayde?
As of your lyfe ye nede not to be afrayde.
For ye of me now have no greater awe,
But whan ye lyst ye may your love wythdraw.

Amoure.

Than stode I up, and right so did she,
 Alas! I sayd than, my heart is so set,
 That it is yours, it may none other be;
 Your selfe hath caught it in so sure a net.
 That if that I may not your favour get,
 No doubt it is, the great payne of love
 May not aswage tyl death it remove.

Pucell.

Truely, quod she, I am obedient
 Unto my frendes whych do me so guyde;
 They shal me rule as is convenient,
 In the snare of love I wyl nothyng slyde,
 My chaunce or fortune I wyl yet abide.
 I thanke you for your love right humbly,
 But I your cause can nothing remedy.

Amoure.

Alas ! madame, yf I have enterprysed
 A thyng to hye truly for my degre,
 All that causes whych I have commysed
 Hath ben on fortunes gentyl unyte,
 Trustyng truely that she wold favour me.
 In this case wherfore now excuse
 Your humble servaunte, and not me refuse.

Pucell.

Ha, ha! what vayleth all your flattery?
 Your fayned wordes shall not me appese
 To make myne herte to enclyne inwardly;
 For I my selfe nowe do nothyng suppose
 But for to prove me you flatter and glose.
 You shall not dye as longe as you speke,
 There is no love can cause your herte to breke.

Amoure.

I wolde, madame, ye hadde prerogatyve
To knowe the prevyte of my perfyte mynde,
How all in payne I lede my wofull lyfe;
Than, as I trowe, ye wolde not be unkynde,
But that some grace I myght in you fynde,
To cause myne herte, whyche you fetred sure
Wyth brenninge cheynes, suche wo to endure.

Pucell.

By veraye reason I may give iudgement,
That it is guyse of you everychone
To fayne you sicke wyth subtyll argument,
Whan to your lady ye list to make your mone:
But of you true is there fewe or none.
For all your payne and wordes eloquent,
Wyth dame Repentaunce I will not be shent.

Amoure.

O swete madame! now all my desteny
Unhap and happy, upon you doth growe :
Yf that you call me unto your mercy
Of all happy the most happy, I trow,
Than shall I be, of hye degre or lowe;
And yf ye lyst so me than to forsake,
Of all unhappy none shal be my make.

Pucell.

Your fortune on me is not more applyed,
Than upon other, for my minde is fre;
I have your purpose oft ynoughe denyed,
You knowe your answeare now certayne;
What nede your wordes of curyosyte?
Wo we here no more, for thou shalt not spede;
Go love another where ye may have mede.

Amoure.

That shall I not; though that I contynewe
All my lyfe in payne and hevynes,
I shall not chaunge you for none other new;
You are my lady, you are my masteres,
Whome I shall serve with all my gentylnes.
Exyle him never from your hert so dere,
Whyche unto hys hath sette you most nere.

Pucell.

The minde of men chaungeth as the mone.
If you mete one whyche is fayre and bryght,
Ye love her best tyll ye se, right soone,
An other fayrer unto your owne syght.
Unto her than your minde is tourned ryght,
Truely your love, though ye make it straunge,
I knowe full well ye wyl often chaunge.

Amoure.

Alas! madame, nowe the bright lodes sterre
Of my true herte, where ever I go or ryde,
Thoughe that my body be from you aferre,
Yet my herte onely shall wyth you abyde,
Whan than you lyst ye may for me provyde.

Pucell.

Nay, truly, it can nothyng be myne,
For I therof take no possessyon;
Your heart is your by substancyall lyne,
It is not in my domynacyon.
Love where ye list; at every season
Your heart is fre, I do not it accept:
It is your owne, I have it never kept.

Amoure.

Alas! madame, ye may say as ye liste,
With your beaute ye toke mine hert in snare;
Your lovely lokes I coude not resyst,
Your vertuous maner encreaseth my care,
That of all joye I am devoyde and bare.
I se you ryght often when I am aslepe,
And whan I wake do sygh with teres depe.

Pucell.

So great deceyt amonge men there is,
That harde it is to finde one full stable;
Ye are so subtil and so false, ywis:
Your great deceyte is nothing commendable.
In storyes olde it is well provable
How many ladyes hath bene right falsely
Wyth men deceyved yll and subtylly.

Amoure.

O goodd madame! though that they abused
Them to theyr ladyes in theyr great deceyte,
Yet am I true; let me not be refused:
Ye have me taken wyth so fayre a bayte,
That ye shall never out of my conceyte.
I can not wrynche by no wyle nor croke,
My heart is fast upon so sure a hoke.

Pucell.

Ye, so sayd they, tyll that they had their wyll;
Theyr wyll accomplysshed, they dyd fle at large;
For men say wel, but they thinke full yll.
Though outwarde swetenes your tonge doth enlarge,
Yet of your heart I never can have charge;
For men do love, as I am right sure,
Nowe one, now other, after theyr pleasure.

Amoure.

All that, madame, I knew ryght perfetly,
Some men there be of that condicyon;
That them delyte often in novelty,
And many also love perfeccyon.
I cast all suche noveltes in objection;
My love is set upon a perfet grounde,
No falshed in me truly shal be founde.

Pucell.

Ye saye full well, yf ye meane the same;
But I in you can have no confydence;
I thinke right well that it is no game
To love unloved wyth Percyng influence.
You shall in me fynde no suche neclygence
To grante you love, for ye are unthryfty,
As two or thre to me doth specify.

Amoure.

Was never lover without enemies thre,
As Envy, Malyce, and Perturbaunce?
Theyr tongues are poyson unto amyte;
What man on live can use suche governaunce
To attayne the favoure withouten varyaunce
Of every persone, but right pryvely
Behinde his backe some sayth unhappely?

Pucell.

Trouthe it is; but yet, in this cace,
Your love and myne is full ferre asunder:
But thoughe that I do your herte so race
Yf I drede you it is therof no wonder;
Wyth my frendes I am so sore kepte under,
I dare not love but as they accorde,
They thynke to wedde me to a myghty lorde.

Amoure.

I knowe, madame, that your frendes all
Unto me sure wyll be contraryous;
But what for that ? your selfe in speciall
Remembre there is no love so joyous
As is your owne to you most precyous;
Wyll you gyve your youthe and your flourynge aege
To them agaynst your mynde in maryage ?

Pucell.

Agaynst my mynde, of that were I lothe,
To wed for fere, as them to obey;
Yet had I lever they were somewhat wrothe,
For I my selfe do bere the locke and kaye
Yet of my mynde, and wyll do many a daye.
Myne owne I am, what that I lyste to do
I stand untyed, there is no joye therto.

Amoure.

O swete lady ! the good perfyte sterre
Of my true herte, take ye now pyte;
Thynke on my payne whiche am tofore you here,
Wyth your swete eyes beholde you and se,
How thought and wo, by great extremyte,
Hath chaunged my hue into pale and wanne:
It was not so whan I to love began.

Pucell.

So, me thynke, it doth right well appere
By your coloure that love hath done you wo;
Your hevy countenance and your dolefull chere;
Hath love suche myght for to aray you so
In so short a space ? I marvayle moche also
That ye wolde love me so sure in certayne,
Before ye knewe that I wolde love agayne ?

Amoure.

My good dere herte ! it is no mervayle why;
Your beaute cleare and lovely lokes swete
My herte dyde perce with love so sodaynly
At the fyrste tyme that I dyde you mete;
In the olde temple whan I dyde you grete,
Your beaute my herte so surely assayde,
That syth that tyme it hath to you obayde.

CAP. XIX.

HOW LA BELL PUCCELL GRAUNTED GRAUND AMOURE LOVE,
AND OF HER DISPITEOUS DEPARTAGE.

Your wo and payne, and all your languishynge
Continuallly ye shall not spende in vayne,
Sythen I am cause of your great mornynge,
Nothyng exyle you shall I by dysdayne;
Youre hert and myne shall never parte in twayne:
Though at the fyrste I wolde not condescende,
It was for fere ye dyde some yll entende.

Amoure.

With thought of yll my mynde was never myxte,
To you, madame, but alway clene and pure,
Bothe daye and nyght upon you hole perfyxte.
But I my mynde yet durst nothyng discure,
How for your sake I dyd suche wo endure,
Tyll now this houre with dredfull hert so faynt
To you, swete herte, I have made my complaynt.

Pucell.

I demed ofte you loved me before,
By your demenour I dyde it aspye,
And in my mynde I juged evermore
That at the laste ye wolde full secretly
Tell me your mynde of love right gentilly;
As ye have done, so my mercy to crave,
In all worshyppe you shal my true love have.

Amoure.

O Lorde God than! how joyfull was I!
She loked on me wyth lovely countenaunce;
I kyst her ones or twise right swetely;
Her depured vysage, replete with pleasaunce,
Rejoyced my heart with amerous purveaunce.
O lady clere! that perste me at the rote,
O floure of comforte, all my hele and bote!

O gemme of vertue, and lady excellent!
Above all other in beauteous goodlynnesse!
O eyen bright as sterre refulgent,
O profounde cause of all my sekenesse,
Now all my joye and all my gladnes,
Wolde God that we were joyned in one,
In maryage, before this day were gone.

Pucell.

A, a! sayd she, ye must take a payne a whyle;
I must depart, by the compulcyon
Of my frendes, I wyl not you begyle,
Though they me led to a ferre nacion,
My heart shall be without variacion
Wyth you present, in perfite sykernes,
As true and stable without doublenes.

To me to come is harde and daungerous,
When I am there; for gyauntes ugly,
Wyth two monstres also, blacke and tedyous,
That by the waye awayte full cruelly
For to distroye you yll and utterly,
Whan you that way do take the passage,
To attayne my love by hye advauntage.

Amoure.

All that, madame, was to me certyfyde
By good dame Fame, at the begynnyng,
Whan she to me of you well notyfyde,
As she came frome the toure of Lernynge,
Of all such enemyes the myght excludynge.
I promyse unto you here, full faythfully,
Whan I departe frome dame Astronomy,

That I wyll to the toure of Chyvalry,
And for your sake become adventurous
To subdue all enemyes to me contrary;
That I may after be ryght joyous
Wyth you, my lady, most swete and precyous.
Wo worth the cause of your departynge,
Which all my sorowes is in renuyng!

Alas! what pleasure, and eke wythout disporte,
Shall I now have, whan that ye be gone?
Ha, ha! truly now wythout good conforte,
My dolorous herte shall be left alone,
Wythout your presence to me is none;
For every houre I shall thynke a yere,
Tyll fortune brynge me unto you more nere.

Yet after you I wyll not be ryght longe,
But hast me after as faste as I maye;
In the toure of Chyvalry I shall make me stronge,
And after that passe shortly on my way,
Wyth diligent laboure on my journey.
Spyte of your enemyes, I shal me so spede,
That in short tyme ye may rewarde my mede.

I thanke you, quod she, with my hert entere;
But yet with me ye shall make covenauant,
As I to you am ryght lefe and dere,
Unto no persone ye shall so advaunte
That I to love you am so attendaunte,
For any thyng your counsell not bewraye,
For that full soone might us bothe betraye.

And to tell me I pray you hertely;
Yonder is Counseyle, how were ye acquaynted?
He is bothe honest and true certaynly:
Doth he not knowe how your hert is faynted,
Wyth fervent love so surely attaynted?
Yf ye so do, yet I nothyng repent,
He is so secrete and true of entent.

Truely, madame, because ye are content
I shall you tell how the matter was;
Whan that your beaute, clerely splendent,
Into my herte full wonderly dyd passe,
Lyke as fayre Phebus dothe shyne in the glas,
All alone, wyth inwarde care so rent,
Into a temple forth on my way I went.

Where that I walked, plunged in the pytte
Of great dispayre; and he than me mette.
Alás! he sayde, me thinke ye lose your wytte;
Tell me the trouth now, wythout any lete,
Why ye demeane suche mortall sorow great.
A voyde! quod I, you shall nothing it knowe,
You can not helpe in the case I trow.

But he suche reason and fruytfull sentence
Dyd for him laye, that I tolde hym all.
Whan he it knewe with all my diligence,
He dyd me conforte than in specyall:
Unto my minde he bad me to call,
Who spareth to speke he to spede doth spare;
Go tell your lady the cause of your care.

By whose counseyle grounded in wysdome,
To the entent I should spede the better,
And ryght shortly I dyd than to you come,
But drede alway made my sorowe greater;
After great payne the joyes is the sweter.
For who that tasteth paynfull bytternes,
The joye to him is double swetenes.

And, therwythall, I did unto her brynge
Councell my frende, and full right meke
Dyd him receive as he was comyng;
And of all thynges she did hym beseke,
After her departinge, the same weke,
To hast me forward to my journeyes ende.
Therto, quod I, I do well condyscende.

Fare well, quod she, I may no lenger tary;
My frendes wyll come; of that were I lothe:
I shall retayne you in my memory,
And they it knewe they wolde with me be wrothe.
To love you best I promise you my trouthe!
And than mine eyen great sorowe shewed,
Wyth teres salte my chekes were endewed.

Her eyes graye began to loke right reed,
Her gaye whyte coloure began for to pale,
Upon her chekes so the droppes were sprede
Whiche from her eyen began to advale;
Frome her swete herte she dyd the syghes hale;
Never before, as I trowe and wene,
Was suche departyng true lovers betwene.

We wyped our chekes our sorowe to cloke,
Outwardly faynyng us to be glad and mery,
That the people should not perceyve the smoke
Of our hote fyre to lyght the emyspery:
'Thoughe inwardly wyth a stormy pery
The fyre was blowen, yet we dyd it cover,
Bycause abroad it should nothyng perceyver.

Out of the garden to an haven syde
Forth he went, where as a shyppe ryght large
That taryed there after the floyng tyde,
And so than dyd there many a bote and barge.
The shyp was great, fyve c. tonne to charge.
La Bell Pucell ryght anone me tolde:
In yondre shyp, whyche that ye beholde,

Forthe must I sayle wythout longer delaye;
 It is full see; my frendes wyll come soone;
 Therefore I pray you to go hence your waye,
 It draweth fast now towarde the none.
 Madame, quod I, your pleasure shal be done.
 Wyth wofull herte and great syghes, ofte
 I kyssed her lyppes, that were swete and softe.

She unto me nor I unto her colde speke,
 And as of that it was no great wondre,
 Our hertes swelled as that they should breke;
 The fyre of love was so sore kept under.
 Whan I from her should depart asundre,
 Wyth her fayre head she dyd lowe enclyne,
 And in lykewyse so dyd I wyth myne.

CAP. XX.

OF THE GREAT SOROWE THAT GRAUNDE AMOUR MADE
 AFTER THE DEPARTYNGE AND OF THE WORDES
 OF COUNCEYLE.

HER frendes and she on theyr waye they sayled
 Alonge the haven, God them save, and bryng
 Unto the londe! I herd whan that they hayled,
 Wyth a great peale of gunnes, at theyr departyng,
 The marvaylous toure of famous cunnyng;
 No gunne was shotte, but my herte dyd wepe
 For her departyng wyth wofull teres depe.

Councell me comforted as ever he myght,
Wyth many storyes of olde antyquyte.
Remembre, he saide, that never yet was wyght
That lyved alway in great tranquylyte,
But that him happed some adversyte;
Than after that, whan the payne was paste,
The double joye dyd comfort them at laste.

Ye nede nothyng for to make great dolour,
Fortune to you hath bene ryght favourable,
Makyng you to attayne the good favour
Of your lady so swete and amyable.
No doubte it is she is true and stable;
And demeane you so that in no wyse
No man perceyve of your love surmyse.

Be hardy, fyers, and also coragyous,
In all your batayles without feblenes,
For ye shall be ryght well victoryous
Of all your enemyes so full of subtylnes.
Arme you wyth wysdome for more surenes,
Let wysdome werke, for she can stedfastly
In tyme of nede resyste the contrary.

Was never man yet surely at the bayte
Wyth Sapyence, but that he dyd repent;
Who that is ruled by her higher estate,
Of hys after wytte shall never be shent;
She is to man ryght benyvolent;
Wyth walles sure she doth hym fortyfye,
Whan it is nede to resyste a contrary.

Was never place where as she did guyde
Wyth enemyes brought to destruccyon;
A remedy she can so well provyde;
To her hygh werke is no comparison,
It hath so stronge and sure foundacyon:
Nothyng there is that can it molyfy,
So sure it is agaynst a contrary.

Of her alwayes it is the parfyte guyse
To begynne nothyng of mutabylyte,
As is the warre which may sone aryse
And wyl not downe, it may so stourdy be,
The begynner oft hath the iniquite.
Whan he began, wysdome did reply,
In his grete nede to resyst the contrary.

The myghty Pryant, somtyme kynge of Troye,
Wyth all his cyte so well fortyfyed,
Lytle regarded all his welth or joye,
Wythout wysdome truely exemplyfied,
His propre death him selfe he nutrifyed;
Agaynst his warre wysdome did reply,
At his grete nede to resyst the contrary.

And where that wysdome ruleth hardynes,
Hardynes than is ever invincyble,
There may nothinge it vanquishe or oppres;
For prudence is so well intellygyble,
To her there is nothing impossible;
Her grounded werke is made so perfytely,
That it must nedes resyst the contrary.

To wofull creatures she is goodly leche,
Wyth her good syster called Pacyence,
To the toure of joye she doth them tell weche,
In the way of hope wythout resystence;
Who to her lyst to applye hys dylygence,
She wyll hym brynge to worshyppe shortly
That he shall well resyst the contrary.

Ryght so let wysdome your sorowe surrendre,
And hye you fast unto dame Geometry,
And let no thought in your herte engendre,
But after thys speke to Astronome;
And so frome thence to the toure of Chyvalry,
Wher of the worthy kynge Melyzyus
You shall be made soone knyght adventurous.

And fare you well, for I must frome you go,
To other lovers whyche are in dyspayre,
As I dyd you, to confort them also:
It is great nede that I to them repayre,
Habundant teres theyr hertes do refleyre.
Farewell! quod I, my good frende so true,
I wolde wyth me ye might alwaye ensue!

Then agayne I went to the toure melodyous
Of good dame Musyke, my leve for to take;
And pryvely wyth these wordes dolorous
I sayd: O toure ! thou mayst well aslake
Suche melody now in the more to make
The gemme is gone of all famous porte,
That was chefe cause of the great comforte.

Whylome thou was the fayre toure of lyght,
But now thou arte replete with darkenes;
She is now gone that shone in the so bryght;
Thou was some time the toure of gladnes,
Now mayst thou be the toure of hevynes,
For the chefe is gone of all thy melody,
Whose beauty clere made moost swete armony.

The fayre carbuncle, so ful of clerenes,
That in thee truely dyd moost purely shyne,
The perle of pyte replete with swetenes,
The gentyll gyllofer, the goodly columbyne,
The redolente plant of the dulcet vyne,
The dede aromatyke may no more ensence,
For she is so ferre out of thy presence.

A, a! truly in the tyme so past,
Myne erande was the often for to se;
Now for to entre I may be agast,
When thou art hens, the sterre of beaute,
For all my delyte was to beholde the!
A! toure, toure! all my joye is gone,
In the to entre comfort is there none!

So then inwardly my selfe bewaylynge,
In the toure I went, into the habytacle
Of dame Musyke, where she was syngynge
The ballades swete in her fayre tabernacle.
Alas! thought I, this is no spectacle
To fede myn eyne, whiche ar now all blynde;
She is not here that I was wonte to fynde.

Than of dame Musyke, with all lowlines
I dyde take my leve, withouten itarenge.
She thanked me with all here mekenes;
And all alone fourth I went musyng.
A, a! quod I, my love and lykinge
Is nowe ferre hence, on whome my hole delyght
Dayly was sette, upon her to have sight.

Fare well, swete herte! farwell, farewell, farewell!
Adieu, adieu! I wold I were you by!
God gyve me grace with you sone to dwell,
Lyke as I dyd for to se you dayly.
Your lowly chere and gentyll company
Rejoysed my herte with fode most delycate,
Myne eyen to se you were insaciate.

Now, good swete herte! my lady and maystresse,
I recomende me unto your pyte;
Besechyng you wyth all my gentylnes,
Yet other whyle to thynke upon me;
What payne I suffer by great extremyte,
And to pardon me of my rude wrytyng,
For with woful herte was myne endytyng!

CAP. XXI.

HOWE GRAUNDE AMOURE WENT TO GEOMETRY, AND WHAT
GEOMETRY IS.

So forth I went, upon a craggy roche,
Upon the toure moost wonderfully wrought
Of Geometry; and as I did approche
The altitude all in my mynd I sought.
Sixe hundreth fote, as by my nomber thought;
Quadrant it was, and did heve and sette
At every storme whan the wind was great.

Thus at the last I came into an hall,
Hanged with arres riche and precious,
And every window glased with cristall,
Lyke a place of plesure much solacious.
With knottes sixeangled, gay and glorious,
The rofe did hange, right high and pleasauntly,
By Geometry made right well and craftely.

In this marveyulous hall, replete with richesse,
At the hye ende she sat full worthely.
I came anone unto her great noblenesse,
And kneled adowne before her mekely.
Madame, I sayd, ye werke full ryally;
I beseche you, with all my diligence,
To instructe me in your wonderfull science.

My science, she sayd, it is moost profitable
Unto Astronomy, for I do it mesure
In every thing as it is probable;
For I my selfe can ryght well discure
Of every sterre, which is sene in ure,
The mervaylous gretnes by my mesuring;
For God made all at the begynnyng.

By good mesuryng both the heyght and depnes
Of every thing, as I understand,
The length and brede with al the greatnes,
Of the firmament so compassing the land;
And who my cunning list to take in hand,
In his emyspery of hye or low degre
Nothing there is but it may measure be.

Though that it be from us hye and farre,
If ony thing fall we may it truely se,
As the sonne or moone or any other sterre,
We may therof know well the quantite.
Who of this science dooth know the certaynte,
All maysteries might measure perfyte;
For geometry doth shew it openly.

Where that is mesure there is no lacking;
Where that is mesure hole is the body;
Where that is mesure good is the living;
Where that is mesure wisdom is truely;
Where that is mesure werke is directly;
Where that is mesure, natures working
Nature increaseth by right good knowledging.

Where lacketh mesure there is no plente;
Where lacketh mesure seke is the courage;
Where lacketh mesure there is iniquite;
Where lacketh mesure there is great outrage;
Where lacketh mesure is none advauntage;
Where lacketh mesure there is great glotony;
Where lacketh mesure is moost unhappy.

For there is no hye nor great estate,
Without mesure can kepe his dignite;
It doth preserve him both early and late,
Keping him from the pytte of poverté.
Mesure is moderate to all bounte,
Gretely nedeful for to take the charge
Man for to rule, that he go not at large.

Who loveth mesure can not do amys,
So perfetely is the high operacion
Among all thynges; so wonderfull it is,
That it is full of all delectacion,
And to vertue hath inclynacion.
Mesure also doth well exemplefy,
The hasty dome to swage and modefy.

Without mesure wo worth the jugement;
Without mesure wo worth the temperaunce;
Without mesure wo worth the punishmeut;
Without mesure wo worth the purveyaunce;
Without mesure wo worth the sustenaunce;
Without mesure wo worth the sadnes;
And without mesure wo worth the gladnes.

Mesure measuring mesurably taketh;
Measure measuring mesuratly dooth all;
Measure measuring mesuratly maketh;
Measure measuring mesuratly guyde shall;
Measure measuring mesuratly doth call;
Measure mesuryng to right hye preemynence,
For alway mesure is grounde of excellence.

Measure measureth mesure in effecte;
Measure measureth every quantyte;
Measure measureth all waye the aspecte;
Measure measureth all in certayne;
Measure measureth in the stabilitie;
Measure mesuryth in every doubtful case;
And mesure is the lodesterre of all grace.

Affycte of mesure is long continuaunce,
Quantite without mesure is nought;
Aspect of mesure devoydeth repentaunce;
Certayne wold weye all thinges thought;
Stabilitie upon a perfite grounde is wrought;
Cace doubtfull may yet a whyle abyde;
Grace may in space a remedy provyde.

Countenaunce causeth the promocyon;
Nought avayleth service without attendaunce,
Repentaunce is after all abusion;
Thought afore wolde have had perseveraunce;
Wrought how should be bydede the mischaunce;
Abyde nothing tyll thou do the dede;
Provyde in mynde how thou mayst have mede.

Promocion groweth after good governaunce;
Attendaunce doth attayne good favour;
Abusyon is causer of all variaunce;
Perceyveraunce causeth great honour;
Mischaunce alway is roote of dolour;
Dede done can not be called agayne;
Mede well rewarded both with joye and payne.

Than I toke my leve, and went from Geometry
Toward Astronomy as fast as I myght:
For all my mynde was set right inwardly
Upon my lady that was fayre and bryght.
My herte with her was bothe day and night:
She had it locked with a locke so sure,
It was her owne, she had therof the cure.

CAP. XXII.

OF DAME ASTRONOMY.

THAN forth I wente into a medow grene,
With Flora paynted in many a sundry colour,
Lyke a gay goddesse of all floures the quene,
She encenced out her aromatyke odour.
The brethe of Zepherus encreased the floure.
Amiddes the medow fayre replendishaunt,
Was a pavilyon right hye and quadraunt,

Of grene sarcenet bordered with golde,
Wherein dede hange a fayre astrology.
Which oft Astronomy did full well beholde;
Unto whome than I came full shortly,
And kneled adowne before her mekely,
Beseching her of her great gentylnes
Of her scyence to shew the perfitenes.

My scyence, sayd she, it is ryght resonable,
And is the last of the sciences seven;
Unto man it is also ryght profitable,
Shewing the course above of the heaven;
Right merveyulous for any man to neven.
Who knew astronomy at every maner ceason,
Might set in ordre every thing by reason.

Also the other vi. sciences liberall
By astronomy principally were found;
And one were lost they were vanished all,
Eche upon other had so sure a ground.
In all the world, that is so wide and round,
Is none so wise that can then multiply,
Nor know them all right well and surely.

The hye astronomier, that is God omnipotent,
That the first day devided all the lyght
Frome the derkenes with his wyll prepotent;
And the second day, with his excellent might,
The waters above he did deuide aryght,
From the erthely waters which are inferiall;
The third daye herbes and fruytes in speciall

In erthe he planted for to have their life
By divers vertues and sundry growing,
So to continue and be vegetative;
And the third day he sette in werking
The bodies above to have their moving,
In the xii. signes them selfe to domify,
Some rethrogarde, and some dyrectly.

The fyfth day he dyd fysshes make;
In the see the great stormy fode,
To and fro theyr courses for to take
And in the water for to have theyr fode,
Lyke to the same colde alway theyr blode;
The vi. day, bestes, wyth foules sensatyve,
And man also, with soule intellectyve.

The sevent day he restes of hys werke,
Nothyng constrayned as of werynes,
As wryteth many a ryght famous clerke;
But that he had accomplysshe doutles
Her purpensed purpose by infynite prowes,
As to us doth moost playnely discure
The perfyte grounde of holy Scrypture.

Thus God hym selfe is chyef astronomyer,
That made all thyng according to his wyll;
The sunne, the mone, and every lytle sterre,
To a good entent and for no maner of yll.
Wythouten vayne he dyd all thyng fulfyll,
As astronomy doth make apparaunce,
By reason he weyed all thynges in balauns.

CAP. XXIII.

OF THE DIRECT OPERATION OF NATURE.

—

AND forasmuche that he made nature
Fyrst of all to have domynacyon,
The power of her I shall anone dyscure,
How that she taketh her operacyon,
And whereupon is her fundacyon,
In symple and rude, opprest wyth neclygence,
Shall discryve the myght of her preemynence.

For though that aungell be invysyble,
Inpalpable, and also celestiall,
Wythouten substaunce as incencyble,
Yet have they nature whych is angelycall;
For nature natyrynge nature made all,
Heven and earth and the bodyes above,
By cours of nature for to werke and move.

On man or beest, wythouten ony mys,
She werketh directly after the aspecte
Of the mater, be it more or lesse, ywys,
And doth therof the hole fourme dyrecte,
After the qualyte it doth take effecte;
Yf there be more than may one suffyse,
A bye membre she wyll than more devyse.

As that in ure ye may it dayly se,
Upon one hande some hath thombes twayne;
And other also somtyme armes thre;
The superfluite is cause therof certayne;
Whyche that dame Nature dooth constrayne
So for to do, for she lesed noughte
Of the mater, but hath it hooly wroughte.

And in like wyse, where is not sufficyent
Of the mater for the hole reformation,
There lacketh a membre by great impediment,
So that there can be no perfyte facyon;
As may be judged by perfyte reason,
After the qualyte of thy matter lackynge,
So lacketh the of natures fourmynge.

Some lacketh a legge, some an arme also,
Some a fynger, and some more or lesse;
All these causes, wyth many other mo,
Nature werketh so dyrectly doutles
Upon the mater, as I do expresse,
After the qualyte in many a sundry wyse,
The kynde of her we ought nothyng to despyse.

Some be fayre and replete with grace;
Some be fayre and yet right unhappy;
Some be foule and can some purchase
Landes and possessyons to them shortely;
Some be fooles and some be ryght wytty;
Whereupon I shall shewe a dyfference
Of the v. wyttes by good experyence.

CAP. XXIV.

OF THE FIVE INTERNALL WITTES.

THE eyen, the eres, and also the nose,
The mouth, and handes, inwarde wyttes are none;
But outwarde offyces, as ye may suppose,
To the inwarde wyttes, whiche do judge alone;
For unto them all thinges have gone,
But these outwarde gates to have the knowledginge,
By the inwarde wyttes to have decernynge.

These are the v. wyttes remeuing inwardly:
Fyrst, commyn wytte, and than ymaginacyon,
Fantasy, and estymacyon truely,
And memory, as I make narracyon;
Eche upon other hath occupacyon.
Fyrst, the comyn wytte unto the front aplyde,
Doth thynke, decerne, it may not be denyde.

Of the eyen the offyce only is the syght,
To se the fayre, the lowe, or altytude,
The whyte, or blacke, the hevy, or the lyght,
The lytle or great, the weyke or fortytude,
The ugly favour, or yet the pulcrytude;
This is the use of the eyene intere,
To se all thynges whiche may well appere.

But of themselfe they can decerne nothyng
One frome an other; but the comyn wytte
Decerneth colours by spyrytuall connyng,
To the fyve inwarde wittes it is so well knytte,
Nothyng is sene but it doth judge it:
It doth decerne the good from badnes,
The hye, the lowe, the foule, the fayrenes.

The nose, also, every ayre doth smel,
But yet it hath nothyng auctoryte
Yf it be swete for to judge and tell;
But the comyn wyt doth it in certaynte,
Decernynge favours in every degre,
Knowynge the swete ayre from the stynkinge,
Whan that the nose therof hath smellinge.

The eres, also, right well gyve audyence
Unto a tale, herynge it perfytely;
But they can not decerne the sentence
To knowe whereupon it doth so ratyfy,
Upon great wysedome or elles upon foly:
Thus, whether the tale be ryght good or bad
By the comyn wytte the knowledge is had.

Foly hath eres as well as sapience,
But he can not determyne by his herynge
What tale it is, for lacke of intelligence;
For the comyn wytte is all understandynge,
And that he lacketh to gyve hym knowynge.
Wherefore the eres are but an intres
To commyn wytte that sheweth the perfytnes.

The mouth tasteth both swete and bytternes,
But the comyn wyt decerneth properly
Yf it be soure or replete wyth swetenes;
Nor yet the handes fele nothyng certaynly,
But the comyn wytte decerneth subtylly
Whether it be harde, moyst, or drynes,
Hote, hevy, softe, or yet colde, doutles.

Thus comyn wytte worketh wonderly,
Upon the v. gates whyche are receptatyve
Of every thyng for to take inwardly,
By the comyn wytte to be affyrmatyve
Or by decernynge to be negatyve;
The comyn wytte, the fyrst of wyttes all,
Is to decerne all thinges in generall.

And than, secondly, ymagynacyon;
Whan the comyn wytte hath the thinge electe,
It werketh by all due inclynacyon
For to brynge the mater to the hole effecte;
And fantasy than hath the hole aspecte,
The ymagyned matter to bring to finysshement,
Wyth good desyre and inwarde judgement.

And estymacion doth well comprehende
The space, the place, and all the purveyaunce
At what time the power might entende
To brynge the cause unto perfyte utteraunce.
Often it weyeth the cause in balaunce,
By estymacyon ony thinge is nombred,
By length or shortnes how it is accombred.

Fyftly, the mynde, whan the fourth have wrought,
Retayned all tyll the minde have made
An outwarde knowlege to the mater thought,
Bycause nothyng shall declyne and fade,
It kepeth the mater nothyng rethrogarde,
But dyrectly, tyll the minde have proved
All suche maters whyche the iiij. have moved.

Plauto, the connyng and famous clerke,
That well expert was in phylosophy,
Doth right reherse upon natures werke,
How that she werketh upon all wonderly,
Bothe for to minyssh and to multely,
In sondry wyse by great dyreccyon
After the maner with all the hole affeccyon.

In my natyf language I wyl not opres,
More of her werke, for it is obscure;
Who wyl therof knowe all the perfeytnes
In phylosophy he shall fynde it ryght sure,
Whyche all the trouth can to hym discure.
No man can attayne perfecte connyng
But by longe stody and diligent lernynge.

CAP. XXXV.

OF THE HYE INFLUENCES OF THE SUPERNALL BODIES.

THE ryght hygh power natures naturyng,
Nature made the bodyes above,
In sundry wyse to take theyr workyng,
That aboute the worlde naturallye do move,
As by good reason the phylosophres prove,
That the planèttes and sterres instrumentes be
To natures werkyng in every degre.

God gave great vertue to the planettes all,
And specially unto depured Phebus,
To enlumyne the worlde ever in specyall;
And than the mone, of her selfe tenebrus,
Made lyght wyth the beames gaye and gorgyous
Of the sunne, is fayre replendysshunte,
In the longe nyght wyth rayes radyaunte.

By these twayne every thyng hath growyng;
Bothe vegetatyfe and censatyve also,
And also intellectuall wythout lesyng:
No erthly thyng may have lyfe and go,
But by the planettes that move to and fro;
Whan that God set them in operacyon,
He gave them vertue in dyvers facyon.

Some hote and moyst, and some colde and dry;
Some hote and drye, moyst and colde;
Thus every one hath vertues sundry,
As is made mencyon in the bokes olde.
They shewe theyr power and werke many a folde;
Man upon them hath his dysposycyon,
By the naturate power of constellacyon.

What shoulde I wryte more in thys matter hye,
In my maternall tonge opprest wyth ignoraunce?
For who that lyst to lerne astronomye,
He shall fynde all fruytfull pleasaunce
In the Latyn tonge by goodly ordenaunce;
Wherfore of it I wyll no lenger tary,
For fere from trouthe that I happen to vary.

Of dame Astronomy I dyd take my lycence
For to travayle to the toure of Chyvalry;
For al my minde, wyth percyng influence,
Was sette upon the most fayre lady
La Bell Pucell, so muche ententyfly,
That every daye I dyd thinke fyftene,
Tyl I agayne had her swete person sene.

To you experte in the seven scyence,
Now al my maysters, I do me excuse
If I offended by my great neclygence.
This lytel werke yet do ye not refuse;
I am but yonge, it is to me obtuse
Of these maters to presume to endyte,
But for my lernyng that I lyst to wryte.

Under obedyence and the true correctyon
 Of you my maysters experte in conninge,
 I me submytte now wyth hole affeccyon
 Unto your perfyte understandyng;
 As evermore mekely to you inclynyng,
 With diligent labour now without doutaunce
 To detraye or adde all at your plesaunce.

CAP. XXVI.

HOW GRAUNDE AMOURE CAME TO THE TOURE OF
 CHYVALRY.

WHAN clene Aurora, with her golden bemes,
 Gan to enlumyne the derke cloudy ayre,
 And combust Dyane her gret fyry lemes
 Amyddes of the Bull began to refflayre;
 Than on my journey, my selfe to repayre,
 Wyth my verlet called Attendaunce,
 Forthe on I rode by longe contynuaunce:

Wyth my grayhoundes, both Grace and Governauce,
 Over an hyll and so downe in a valley,
 Amonge the thornes of great encumbraunce,
 The goodli greyhounds caught me on mi wey.
 So foorth I passed my troublous journey,
 Tyll that I came unto a ryall playne,
 With Flora paynted in many a sundry vayne.

My name, quod I, is Graunde Amoure;
Of late I came fro the toure of Doctryne,
Where I attayned all the hygh honoure
Of the seven scyences, me to enlumyne;
And frome thence I dyd determyne
Forthe to travayle to thys toure of Chyvalry,
Where I have blowen thys blast so sodeynly.

Whan he herd thys, ryght gentylly he sayd:
Unto thys toure ye must resorte by ryght
For to renue that hath be longe decayd,
The flour of Chyvalry, with your hole delyght.
Come on your way, it draweth toward nyghte.
And therwith all he ledde me to his warde,
Me to repose in pleasaunt due saufgard.

After the travayle my selfe for to ease,
I did there reste in all goodly wyse,
And slept right well without any disease,
Till on the morow the sonne did aryse;
Than up I rose, as was my perfyte guyse,
And made me redy into the courte to go,
With my verlet and greyhoundes also.

The gentil porter, named Stedfastnes,
Into the basse courte on my way he brought,
Where stode a toure of mervaylous highnes,
That al of jasper ful wonderly wrought,
As ony man can printe in his thought;
And foure ymages above the toure there were,
On horsebacke, armed, and every one a spere.

These ymages were made ful curiously,
Wyth theyr horses of the stele so fyne,
And eche of them, in theyr places sundry,
About were sette that clerely dyd shyne,
Lyke Dyane clere in her spere celestyne;
And under eche horse there was, ful pryvely,
A great whele made by craftly Geometry,

Wyth many cogges, unto whiche were tyed
Dyvers cordes that in the horses holowe
To every joynte full wonderly applyed;
Whan the wheles wente the horses dyd folowe,
To trotte and galop both even and morowe,
Brekyng the spere and coude them dyscharge,
Partynge asonder for to turney at large.

CAP. XXVII.

OF THE MARVEYLOUS ARGUMENT BETWENE MARS AND
FORTUNE.

BESYDE this toure of olde foundation
There was a temple strongly edefyed;
To the high honoure and reputacyon
Of the mighty Mars it was so fortelyed:
And for to know what it signified
I entred in, and sawe of golde so pure
Of worthy Mars the mervaylous pecture.

There was depaynted all about the wall
The grete destruccion of the cite of Troye;
And the noble actes do reygne memoryall
Of the worthy Hector that was all theyr joye.
His dolorus death was herde to occoye;
And so whan Hector was cast all downe,
The hardy Troylus was moost hyghe of renowne.

And as I cast my syght so asyde,
Beholdynge Mars how wonderly he stode,
On a whele top with a lady of pryde
Haunced aboute, I thought nothing but good,
But that she had two faces in one hode;
Yet I kneled adowne and made mine oryson,
To doughty Mars, wyth grete devocyon.

Sayenge: O Mars! O god of the warre!
The gentyll lodesterre of an hardy herte,
Dystyll adowne thy grace from so farre
To cause all fere from me to astert:
That in the felde I may ryght well subverte
The hedyus monsters, and winne the victory
Of the sturdy giauntes with famous chyvalry.

O prynce of honour and of worthy fame!
O noble knightes of olde antiquite!
O redouted courage, the cause of theyr name,
Whose worthy actes fame caused to be
In bokes wrytten, as ye maye well se!
So gyve me grace ryght well to secure
The power of fame that shall long endure.

I thought me past al chyldly ygnoraunce,
The xxxi. yere of my yonge flouryng aeg;
I thought that Venus might nothyng avaunce
Her strength against me with her lusty courage;
My wytte I thought had suche avauntage,
That it should rule both Venus and Cupyde:
But, alas for wo ! for all my sodayne pryde!

Whan that Phebus entred was in Gemine,
Toward the Crab takynge ascencyon,
At the tyme of the great solempnite
From heven above of Goddes descencyon;
In a grete temple with hole entencyon
As I went walkyng my selfe to and fro,
Full sodaynly Venus wrought me such wo.

For as I cast than my syght all alofte,
I sawe Venus in beaute so clere,
Which caused Cupide wyth his darte so softe,
To wounde my herte wyth fervent love so dere;
Her lovyng countenaunce so hyghe dyd appere,
That it me ravyshed wyth a sodayne thought,
Alas for wo! it vayled me ryght nought.

To gyve audyence unto the melody
Of waytes and organs that were at the fest,
Love had me wounded so sore inwardly,
What was to do I knewe not the best.
Replete wyth sorowe and devoyde of rest,
Sythen the tyme that she my hert soo wounded,
My joy and pryde she hath full lowe confounded.

And so nowe, for to attayne her grace,
As thou doost knowe become aduenturous,
Beseeching the in thys peryllous case,
O Mars! me succoure in tyme tempestuous,
That I may passe the passage daungerous,
And to thy laude, honoure, and glorye,
I shal a temple ryght strongly edefy.

Well than, sayd Mars, I shall the fortifye
In all thy warre as fast as I can.
But for thy payne I knowe no remedy,
For Venus reyned whan that thou began,
Fyrst for to love making the pale and wanne;
And of the trouthe to make relacyon
Thou was borne under her consolacion.

Wherefore thou must, of veray perfyte ryght,
Unto her sue by the disposicion
Whiche the constreyneth wyth hole delyght
For to love ladies by true affeccion.
Suche is her course and operacion.
Wherefore whan thou hast lerned perfytely
The for to governe by prudent chyvalry,

Than, to fulfyll the ryght hye enterpryse,
Forth on thy waye thou shalt thy journey take,
Unto a temple in all humble wyse
Before dame Venus thine oblacion to make,
Whiche all thy payne may sone redresse and slake;
For at that tyme she holdeth a parlemente,
To redress lovers of theyr impedimente.

A, ha! quod Fortune, with the faces twayne,
Behynde syr Mars; I have a grete mervayle
That thou dost promyse him that he shal attayne
Unto his purpose with al diligent travayle,
Through thyne ayd, eke strength and counsayl;
Sythens dependeth in myn ordenaunce,
Hym to promote or brynge to myschaunce.

My power, estate, and ryall dygnyte,
Doth torne the whele of worthely glorie
Often up so downe by mutabilyte.
Have not I promoted full nobly
Many a lowe degre to reigne full ryally?
And often have made a transmutacion
Of worldly welthe into tribulacion?

Thus can I make an alteracion
Of worthely honoure, whiche doth depende
All onely in my dominacion;
Through the worlde my whele doth extende,
As reason doth ryght well comprehende;
Of my great chaunces whiche are unsure,
As dayly doth appere well in ure.

If I should worke with perfite stedfastnes,
And to exalte some to be honourable,
And that they knewe by perfyte sykernes,
That it should dure and not be variable,
It were a thyng unto me culpable;
For great orguell pryde should them so blynde,
To knowe them selfe they should lose their mynde.

Thus whan that they should them selfe forgete,
And in no wyse their owne persone knowe,
Full lytell than they would by me sette,
That them exalted to hye degre from lowe;
And by my chaunce could nought them overthrowe;
Thus should they do and drede me nothyng,
Wherefore my whele is evermore tournyng.

And where that I shoulde turne my face,
Castinge some in pytte of poverte,
They were condampned without ony grace
As for to attayne any prosperite;
Whiche were a cause of greate iniquite:
For riche mennes goodes I must ofte translate,
Unto the poore, them for to elevate.

And thyrdeley; I shoulde lese my name,
For this worde fortune is well derifyde
Of an accydent chaunge, both good or shame,
Whan that the deade is so exemplifyde;
Wherefore by reason I must be duplifyde;
And nothing stable in myne hye werke,
As wryteth many a ryght noble clerke.

Therefore by reason I must be mutable,
And turne my whele right ofte up so downe,
Labouringe in werkes whiche are unstable,
On some to laughe and on some I must frowne;
Thus all aboute in every realme and towne,
I shew my power in every sundry wyse,
Some to descende and on some to aryse.

Wherefore my power doth ryght well excell
Above the, Mars, in thine house enclosed;
For to rule man thou hast power never a dele,
Save after the somewhat he is disposed:
Thy consolacion hath him so apposed
Who under the taketh his nativitie,
Yet God hath gyven him power to rule the.

Wherefore I am of a ferre hyer power
Than thou arte; for there is no defence
Agaynst my wyll at any time or houre;
And in my name there is a difference,
For in these wordes in my magnifycence
Predestinate, and also desteny,
As I shall shew anone more formably.

Predestinate doth right well signify
A thing to come, whiche is prepared:
None but God doth know it openly,
Tyl that the dede caused to be declared;
For many one, whan they well fared,
Full lytell thought that tribulacion
To them was ordeyned by predestinacion.

The desteny is a thyng accydent,
And by the werke doth take the effecte;
Tyll it be done it is ay precedent,
And man from it can him selfe abject.
Thus every chaunce doth Fortune drecte.
Wherefore, by reason, La Graunde Amoure
Must sue unto me to do him socour.

Aha! quod Mars, suche a one as thou
I never knew before this ceason;
For thou thy selfe doost so much enprou
Above the havens by exaltacion;
But what for all thy commendacion?
Arte thou now any thing substanciall,
Spirituell, or els yet terrestriall?

How can a werke perfytely be grounded
But in these two? and thou arte of those:
Wherefore for nought thou mayst be confounded;
For nought in substaunce can nothing transpose;
Of none effecte thou canst thy selfe disclose;
How hast thou power, in any maner of case,
In heven or earth without a dwellyng place?

But that poetes hath made a figure
Of the, for the great sygnification
The chaunge of man so for to discure,
Accordyng to a moralyzacion;
And of the trouth to make relacion,
The man is fortune in the propre dede,
And not thou that causeth hym to spede.

What nedeth him unto his selfe to sue,
Sythen thou art the dedes of his chaunce;
Thou to rule man, it is a thyng not true,
Nowe wherupon doth hange this ordenaunce,
But accedent upon the governaunce
Of the hye bodis, whiche doth man dispose
The dede to do as hym lyst purpose.

To here of Mars the marveyulous argument,
And of Fortune, I was sore amased;
Tyll that I sawe a lady excellent,
Clerely armed, upon whome I gased,
And her armes ful prevely I blased:
The shelde of golde, as I well understande,
With a lyon of asure through passande.

To me she came, with lowely countenaunce,
And bad me welcome unto that mancion,
Ledyng me forth wyth joy and pleasaunce
Into an hall of mervaylous facion,
Right strongly fortyfyde of olde foundation,
The pillars of yvery garnished with golde,
With perles sette and broudred many a folde.

The flore was paved with stones precious,
And the rofe was braunched curiously
Of the beten golde both gaye and glorious,
Knotted with pomaunders right swetely,
Encencing out the yll odours misty;
And on the walles right well did appere
The sege of Thebes depaynted fayre and clere.

There were knightes playeng at the chesse,
Which saw Minerve lede me in the hall;
They lefte their play and all theyr besines,
And welcomed me right gentely withall,
With sir Nurture than moost in speciall,
Accompanied of his brother Curtesy;
They made me chere than full effectuall.

And after that they brought me up a stayre,
Into a chambre gayly glorified;
And at the dore there stode a knight right fayre,
Ye cleped Trowth, right clerely purified;
His countenaunce was right well modified;
To me he sayde that, before mine entres,
Him for to love I should him promes.

Of ryght, he sayde, I have in custody
This chambre dore of king Melezius,
That no man enter into it wrongfully,
Without me, Trouthe, for to be chivalrous;
Here knightes be made to be victorious.
I shall you promise, quoth I, faythfully,
You for to love and serve prudently.

Abyde, quod he, I wyll speke with the kynge;
Tell me your name and habitation,
And the chefe cause now of your coming,
That I to him may make relacion,
To knowe his minde without variacion.
La Graund Amour my name is, sayd I;
The cause of my coming, intentifly,

Is for bicause that I have enterprised,
Now for the sake of fayre La Bell Pucell,
To passe the passage that I her promised
That is so daungerous with serpentes cruell;
And for as much as I know never a dell
The festes of armes to attayne honoure,
I am come to lerne with diligent labour.

Then forth he went unto the mageste
Of king Melizius the mighty conquerour,
Sayeng: O power so hye in dignitie!
O prynce victorious and famous emperour!
Of justynge truely the originall floure;
One Graunde Amoure wolde be acceptable,
In your hye courte for to be tendable.

With all my herte I wyll, quod he, accepte
Hym to my servyce, for he is right worthy:
For unto Doctryne the hye way he kept,
And so from thens to the toure of Chyvalry.
He shall attayne great actes wonderly.
Go on your way, and bryng him fast to me,
For I thinke long him to beholde and se.

And than the good knight Trowth incontinent
Into the chambre so pure soone me lede,
Where sate the king so much benevolent,
In purple clothed, set full of rubyes rede;
And all the flore on which we did tread
Was crystall clere, and the rofe at night
With carbuncles did geve a merveylous lyght.

The walles were hanged with cloth of tyssue,
Broudred with perles and rubies rubicond,
Mixte with emerauds so full of vertue
And brodred above with many a diamonde.
An hevy herte it wolde make jocunde
For to behold the merveylous riches,
The lordship, welth, and the great worthines.

There sate Melezius, in his hye estate,
And over his head was a payre of balaunce;
With his crowne and septer, after the true rate
Of another wordly king for to have governaunce,
In his hand a ball of right great cyrcumstaunce.
Before whome than I did knele adowne,
Sayeng: O Emperour! moost hye of renowne,

I the beseche, of thine haboundaunt grace,
Me to accepte in this courte the for to serve,
So to contynue by longe time and space,
Of chivalry that I may now deserve
The order right, and well it to observe;
For to attayne the high advauntage
Of the enterpryse of my doughty vyage.

Welcome, he sayd, to this court ryal!
Mynerve shall arme you with grete dylygence.
And teche you the feates of armes all;
For she them knoweth by good experyence,
In the olde tyme it was her scyence.
And I my selfe shall gyve you a worthy stede,
Called Galantyse, to helpe you in your nede.

I humbly thanked his grete hyenes;
And so to Mynerve I dyd than applye,
Whiche dyd me teche with syker perfytnes
For to haunt armes ryght well and nobly.
Sapyence me ruled well and prudently;
Thus amonge knyghtes for to just and tourney,
Mynerve me taught in sundry wyse all day.

It was a joyfull and a knyghtly syght,
For to beholde so fayre and good a sorte
Of goodly knyghtes armed clere and bryght,
That I sawe there, whiche dyd me well exorte
Armes to haunte with coragious comforte:
Mynerve me taught my strokes and defence,
That in short space was no resystence

Agaynst my powre and myghty puyssaunce;
To my wylfull herte was nought impossyble,
I bare my selfe so without doubtaunce
My herte made my courage invyncible,
Of whiche the trouthe was soone intellygyble,
With my behavyng before the preemynence
Of kyng Melezius famous excellence.

Which right anone for dame Minerve sent,
And me also, with sir Trouth to obey.
We thought full litell what the mater ment,
But unto him we toke anone the way,
Entring the chambre so fayre, clere, and gay.
The king us called unto his person,
Sayeng: I wyll Graund Amoure anone

Truly make knight; for the time approcheth
That he must haunt and seke adventure
For La Belle Pucell, as true love requireth.
And first of all began to me discure
The highe order how I shoulde take in cure;
And than anone he gan to expresse
What knighthode was to perfite sekernesse.

Knighthode, he sayd, was first established
The comenwelth in right to defende,
That by the wrong it be not minished;
So every knight did truely condescende,
For the comynwelth his power to entende
Ageynst all suche rebelles contrarious,
Them to subdue with power victorious!

For knighthode is not in the feates of warre,
As for to fight in quarell right or wronge,
But in a cause which trouth can not defarre;
He ought him selfe for to make sure and stronge
Justice to kepe mixt with mercy amonge;
And no quarell a knight ought to take,
But for a trouth or for the comins sake.

For fyrst, good hope his legge harneys sholde be;
His habergion of perfyte ryghtwysenes;
Gyrde faste wyth the gyrdle of chastite,
His riche placarde should be good besines,
Brandred with almes so full of larges;
The helmet mekenes, and the shelde good fayth;
His swerde Goddes worde, as saynt Poule sayth.

Also true wyddowes he ought to restore
Unto their right for to attayne theyr dower,
And to upholde and mainteyne evermore
The welth of maydens with his myghty power.
And to his soverayne, at every maner hower,
To be redy, true, and eke obeysaunt,
In stable love fixt and not variaunt.

Thus, after this noble and solempne doctryne,
He made me knight, and gave me in charge
Unto these poyntes right low to enclyne,
And to stere well the frayle tombling barge
Over vayne glory whan I sayle at large.
Whan the winde is right, the barge can not fayle,
Unto his purpose so with hardines to sayle.

I dyd well register in my remembraunce
Every thing which he hath to me tolde,
And right anone in good resembaunce
The kyng I thanked, with courage right bolde,
Of his great grace and giftes many a folde,
Which unto me right openly he shewed,
With golden droppes so lyberally indewed.

I toke my leve of his right hye estate;
And than Mynerve into the hall me brought,
Accompanied by Trough, my faythfull mate.
Us for to solace ther laced right nought,
That ony man can printe in his thought;
The knightes all unto their armes went,
To bryng me forward with a true entent.

And Mynerve armed me as she coude devyse,
And brought unto me my fayre barbed stede,
On whome I mounted in all goodly guyse,
With shelde and spere, as nothing to drede
In right to fyght for to attayne my mede.
So with me wente both my greyhoundes twayne,
And good Attendaunce, my verlet certayne.

The good knight Trouth brought me on the way,
Accompanied then of syr Fidelitie,
Wyth haute courage betrapped fayre and gaye
Wyth shyning trappers of curiositie;
And then also there rode forth wyth me
The sturdy knight well named Fortitude,
With the noble veterane syr Consuetude.

And eke syr Justice and syr Mysericorde,
Syr Sapience, with good syr Curteysy;
Wyth famous Nurture, and than syr Concorde
Accompanied me full ryght gentyllly
Oute of the castell, ryding ryally;
And dame Minerve, the chevalryous goddes,
Dyd me endue then with harty hardynes.

And whan we came into a goodly playne,
Right of them all I toke my lycence;
Me thought it time that they tourne agayne
Unto the king with all their diligence.
I made mine othe with percing influence,
Unto them all for to remayne full true
In stedfast love, all treason to eschue.

Full loth they were fro me to departe,
Every one of them, as ye may understande;
With salt teres full wofull was my herte,
Whan all on rowe they toke me by the hande.
Adew! they sayd, and grace with you stand,
You for to ayde whan that you do fyght!
And so they turned unto the castell ryght.

And good dame Mynerve unto me then sayd:
Be not adredde of your hye enterpryse;
Be bolde and hardy and nothing afrayde;
And rather deye in ony maner of wyse,
To attayne honour and the lyfe dyspyse,
Than for to lyve and remayne in shame;
For to dye with honour it is a good name.

Fare well! she sayd, and be of good chere;
I must departe, I may no lenger tary;
Ryde on your way, the weder is full clere;
Seke your adventure, and loke you not vary
Frome your hye order by ony contrary.
And therewithall forth on her way she rode,
Ryght so did I, which no longer abode,

With both my greyhoundes and my varlet,
Through the playne and into wyldernes,
And so alofte amonge the hylles greate,
Tyll it was nyght so thicke of darkenes
That of constraynt of very werynes
We lyght adowne, under an hyll syde,
Unto the day to rest us there that tyde.

And whan my page my helmet unlaced,
He layde it downe underneth my hede,
And to his legge he my stede embraced
To grase about while on the grase he fed;
And than also his horse in lyke stede
With both our greyhoundes lyeng us nere by;
And slouthe our hedes had caught so sodaynly,

That all the nyght we slepte in good reste,
Tyll agaynst day began to nese and cry
My stede Galantyse with a roryng breste,
And eke began to stampe full marveyulously;
Whose hye courage awaked us wonderly,
And ryght anone we kast up our eyes,
Beholdyng above the fayre crystall skyes.

Seynge the cloudes rayed fayre and rede
Of Phebus rysinge in the orient,
And Aurora her golden bemes sprede
About the ayre clerely refulgent,
Withouten mysty blacke encombremente,
Up I arose and also my page,
Makyng us redy for to take our vyage.

CAP. XXIX.

HOWE HE DEPARTED FROM KYNGE MELYZYUS, WITH HIS
GRAYHOUNDES AND ATTENDAUNCE, HIS VARLET, AND
MET WITH FALSE REPORTE, THAT CHAUNGED HIS
NAME TO GODFREY GOBILYVE.

AND so forth we rode, tyll we sawe aferre
To us came rydyng, on a lytell nagge,
A folysshe dwarfe, nothyng for the warre,
With a hood, a bell, a foyxtayle, and a bagge;
In a pyed cote he rode brygge a bragge;
And whan that he unto us drewe nye,
I behelde his body and his visnamy.

His head was greate, beteled was his browes,
Hys eyen holow, and his nose crokcd;
His bryes brystled truely lyke a sowes;
His chekes here, and God wote he loked
Full lyke an ape, here and there he toted
With a pyed berde and hangyng lyppes grete,
And every tothe as blacke as ony gete.

His necke shorte, his sholders stode awry.
His breste fatte and bolne in the wast;
His armes great, with fyngers crokcdly;
His legges kewed; he rode to me fast,
Full lyke a patron to be shaped in hast.
Good even, he sayd, and have good day,
If that it lyke you for to ryde merely.

Welcome, I sayde; I praye the now tell
Me what thou arte and where thou dost dwell?
Sothelyche, quod he, whan Icham in Kent
At home Icham; though I be hether sente,
Icham a gentylman of much noble kynne,
Though Iche be clad in a knaves skynne.
For there was one called Peter Pratefast,
That in all hys lyfe spake no worde in waste;
He wedde a wyfe that was called Maude.
I trowe, quod I, she was a gorgious baude.
Thou lyst, quod he, she was gentyl and good,
She gave her husbande many a furde hode,
And at his melys, without any mys,
She wolde him serve in clenly wyse ywys.
God love her soule as she loved clennes,
And kepe her dysshes from al foulnes.

Whan she lacketh cloutes, without any fayle
 She wyped her disshes wyth her dogges tayle.
 And they had yssue Sym Saddle-gander,
 That for a wyfe in all the worlde did wander,
 Tyll at the last, in the wynters nyght,
 By Temmes he sayled, aryved by ryght
 Amonge the nunnes of the grene cote.
 He wente to lande out of his prety bote,
 And wedde there one that was comen anewe:
 He thought her stable, and faythfull, and trewe.
 Her name was Betres, that so clenly was,
 That no fylthe by her in any wyse shoulde passe.

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And betwene them bothe they did get a sonne,
 Whiche was my father, that in Kente did wonne.
 His name was Davy Dronken-nole,
 He never dranke but in a fayre blacke boule.
 He toke a wyfe that was very fayre,
 And gate me on her for to be his ayre.
 Her name was Alyson, she loved nought elles
 But ever more to rynge her blacke belles.
 Now are they deade all, so mote I well thryve,
 Excepte my selfe Godfray Gobelive,
 Whiche rode about a wyfe me to seke,
 But I can finde none that is good and meke;
 For all are shrewes in the world aboute,
 I coude never mete with none other route;
 For some develles wyll their husbandes bete,
 And tho that can not, they wyll never let
 Their tongues cease, but gyve thre wordes for one,
 Fy on them all! I wyll of them have none:
 Who loveth any for to make hym sadde,

I wene that he become worse than madde.
They are not stedfast nothyng in their mynde,
But alway tornyng lyke a blaste of wynde.
For let a man love them never so wele,
They will hym love agayne never a dele.
For though a man all his lyfe certayne
Unto her sue to have release of payne,
And at the last she on hym do rewe,
If by fortune there come another newe,
The first shall be clene out of her favoure.
Recorde of Creseyd and of Troylus the doloure.
They are so subtyll and so false of kynde,
There can no man wade beyonde their mynde.
Was not Aristotle for all his clergy,
For a woman rapt in love so marveylously,
That all his connyng he had sone forgotten.
This unhap love had his mynde so broken,
That evermore the salte teres downe hayled
Whan the chaunce of love he hymselfe bewayled.
Aferde he was of the true love to breke,
For sayng nay whan he therof should speke ;
Tyll of constraynt of wofull hevyns,
For to have remedy of his sore sekens,
Whan he her spyed ryght secrete alone,
Unto her he wente and made all his mone.
Alas! he sayd, the cause of my wo,
Myne only lady and maystres also,
Whose goodly beaute hath my harte enrached,
With fervent love and fyry lemes entached,
Wherefore take pyte of the paynfull sorowe
Of me your servaunt both even and morowe.
She stode ryght styll, and hearde what he sayde:
Alas! quod she, be ye no more dismayed,

For I am content to fulfill your will
In every maner, be it good or ill,
Of this condicion; that ye shall release
Me first of my wo and great distresse;
For I my selfe have thought many a daye
To you to speake, but for feare of a nay
I durst never of the matter meve
Unto your person, lest it should you greve.
Nay, nay, quod he, with all my whole entente,
I shall obeye to your commaundement.
Well then, quod she, I shall you nowe tell
Howe the case standeth, truely, every dele:
For you knowe well that some women do long
After nyce thynges, be it ryght or wrong.
Ryght so must I upon your backe nowe ryde,
In your mouthe also a brydle you to guyde.
And so a brydle she put in his mouthe,
Upon his backe she rode both north and south,
About a chamber as some clarkes wene,
Of many persones it was openly sene!
Lo! what is love, that can so sore blynde
A philosopher to bryng hym out of kynde?
For love doth passe any maner of thyng,
It is harde and privy in workyng.
So on the grounde Aristotle crept,
And in his teeth she long the brydle kept,
Till she therof had inough her fyll;
And yet for this he never had his wyll.
She dyd nothing but for to mocke and scorne
This true lover whiche was for love forlorne:
But when he knewe the poynt of the case,
The fyry angre dyde hys herte embrace,
That he him selfe dyd anone well knowe,

His angre dyd his love so overthrowe,
And ryght anone, as some poets wryte,
He the gret mockage dyd her well acqyute.
Dyd not a woman the famouse Vyrghyle
By her greate fraude full craftely begyle?
For on a day, for hys owne dysporte,
To the court of Rome he gan to resorte,
Amonge the ladyes the tyme for to passe;
Tyl at the last, lyke Phebus in the glasse,
So dyd a lady wyth her beaute clere
Shyne throughe his hert wyth suche love so dere,
That of great force he must nedes obey,
She of his mynde bare bothe the locke and the kay:
So was his hart set upon a fyre
Wyth fervent love to attayne hys desyre.
She had him caught in suche a wyly snare,
Great was his payne and muche more his care,
To fynde a tyme whan it should be meved
To her of love and he nothyng reprevd.
Thus every day, by ymagynacyon,
In his mynde was suche perturbacyon,
And at the last he had found a tyme
Hym thought to speke, and unto hym no cryme.
Mercy! lady, nowe, in all humble wyse,
To her he sayd: for yf ye me dyspyse
So hath your beaute my true hart aryed,
It is no mervayle thoughe I be afrayde
To you to speake it, that you deny
My purpose truely I am marde utterly.
So do I love now wyth all my heart entere,
Wyth inwarde care I by your beauty dere,
I must abyde wyth all my hole entente
Of lyfe or death your onely judgement.

Wyth fayned cares of perfyte audyence
She did him here, gyvyng this sentence:
Vyrgyl, she sayd, I wolde fayne you ease
Of your trouble, and of your great disease;
But I wote not howe that it should be,
Without tournynge us to great dyshoneste;
If it be knowen, than bothe you and I
Shall be reheited at full shamefully.
But what for that? I have me bethought
A praty craft by me shalbe wrought.
Ye knowe my chambre joyneth to a wall,
Beynge right hyghe and a wyndowe wythall.
Soone at nyght, when all folke be at reast.
I shall take a basket as me thynketh beast,
And therto I shall a longe corde well tye,
And from the wyndowe let it downe pryvely.
Right so, whan it is downe on the grounde,
Ye may well entre in it, both hole and sound,
And my two maydens the whiche secrete be
Shall anone helpe to hale you up with me.
Lo! in this wyse you may have ryght well
Your owne desyre in short space every deel.
At xi. of the clocke, in the nyght so darke,
They did appoynt for to fulfyll this worke.
He often thanked her gentlines,
And so departed with great gladnes;
And so he went unto his study,
Passyng the tyme himselfe full merely,
Tyll that the clocke did strike aleven,
Then to the wall he went full even,
And founde the basket at the grounde already,
And entred into it full sodaynly,
Waggyng the rope, which the lady espied,

Whiche to the wyndowe ryght anone her hyed.
 With her two maydens she did him up wynde,
 Amiddes the wall, and left hym there behynde,
 That was fyve fadom and more from the grounde.
 When him selfe in suche a case he founde,
 Alas! he sayde, myne owne lady, save
 Myne honestye, and what ye list to have,
 Ye shall have it at your owne desire.
 Nowe wynde me up, my hart is on fyre.
 Thou shalt, quod she, in that place abyde,
 That all the cytie so ryght long and wyde
 May the beholde and the matter knowe,
 For myne honestie, and thy shame, I trowe.
 So there he hong tyll noone of the daye,
 That every persone whiche went by the waye
 Myght hym well se and also beholde,
 And unto them the very cause she tolde.
 Lo, howe with shame she her love rewarded.
 His payne and sorowe she nothyng regarded;
 Thus at the last he adowne was brought,
 Replete with shame, it vayleth hym ryght nought.
 Thus with great anger he his love confounded,
 Healyng the stroke whiche that she hath wounded.
 And by his craft he in Rome did drenche
 Every fyre for he left none to quenche,
 And towarde Rome a great circuite aboute,
 There was no fyre that was un-put-out.

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Thus all the cytie upon her did wonder,
 For perfite sorowe her harte was nere asunder;
 And thus Vyrigyle, with crafty subtilnes,
 Rewarded her falshode and doublenes.
 All this I tell though that I be a fole,
 To the, yong knight, for thou maist go to schole,
 In tyme commyng of true love to learne.
 Beware of that for thou canst not decerne
 Thy ladies mynde: though that she speake the fayre,
 Her harte is false, she wyll no truthe repayre.
 Nay, quod I, they are not all disposed
 So for to do as ye have here disclosed.
 Aha! quod he, I trowe well ye be
 A true lover: so mote I thrive and the,
 Let not thy lady of thy harte be rother;
 When thou art gone, she wyll sone have another.
 Thus forth we rode tyll we sawe afarre
 A royall tower as bryght as any starre,
 To whiche we rode as fast as we myght.
 When we came there, adowne my stede I lyght,
 So dyd this Godfrey Gobilive also;
 Into the temple after me gan go.
 There sate dame Venus and Cupide her sonne,
 Whiche had their parliament ryght newly begone.
 To redresse lovers of their payne and wo,
 Whiche in the temple did walke to and fro.
 And every one his byll did present
 Before Venus in her hyghe parliament.

The temple of her royall consistory
Was walled all about with yvory,
All of golde, like a place solacious,
The rouse was made of knottes curious.
I can nothing extende the goodlines
Of her temple, so much of ryches.
This Godfrey Gobilyve went lightly
Unto dame Sapience, the secretary,
That did him make this supplication
To the goddesse Venus with brevacion:
Redresse my payne of mortall heaviness;
I did once woe an olde mayden ryche
A foule thefe, an olde wydred wiche.
Fayre mayde, I sayd, will ye me have?
Nay sir, so God me kepe and save!
For you are evill favoured and also ugly,
I am the worse to se your visnamy;
Yet was she fouler many an hundred folde
Then I my selfe, as ye may well beholde.
And therewithall he caused to depaynte
His face and hers, all under his complaynte.
And to Venus he made deliveraunce
Of his complaint by a short circumstaunce;
Whiche ryght anone, when she had it sene,
Began to laughe with all the courte I wene.
Lo here the fygures of them both certayne,
Judge whiche is best favoured of them twayne.
Thus Godfrey Gobilyve did make such a sporte,
That many lovers to hym did resorte;
When I sawe tyme I went to Sapience,
Shewyng to her with all my diligence
Howe that my hart by Venus was trapt,
With a snare of love so prively bewrapt;

And in her tower to have a dwellyng place,
I seke adventures to attayne her grace.
Her name, quod I, La Bell Pucell is,
Both east and west she is well knownen ywys:
And my name, La Graunde Amoure is called,
Whose harte with payne she all about hath walled
With her beautie, whiche dame Nature create,
Above all other in most hygh estate.
Well, sayde Sapience, I thinke in my mynde
Her love and favoure you shall attayne by kynde;
And I wyll drawe to you incontinent.
All your complaynt, as is convenient
Unto dame Venus, to se directly
For your payne and sorowe sone a remedy.
She drewe my pyteous lamentacion,
Accordyng to this supplication:

CAP. XXX.

THE SUPPLICATION.

O, VENUS! lady, and excellent goddesse,
O celestiaall starre! havynge the soverayntie
Above all other starres as lady and princes,
As is according unto your deitie;
Pleaseth it nowe your great benignitie
Unto my complaynt for to geve audience,
Whiche burne in love with pearcyng vyolence.

For so it happened that the lady Fame
Did with me mete, and gan to expresse
Of a fayre lady whiche had unto name
La Bell Pucel, come of hye noblesse;
Whose beautie cleare and comely goodlines
From day to day doth ryght well renenue,
With grace brydled and with great vertue.

She tolde me of her fayre habitation,
And of the wayes therto full daungerous;
Her swete report gave me exhortation
Unto my herte for to be courigious,
To passe the passage harde and troublous;
And to bring me out of great encumbrance,
She me delyvered both Grace and Governauce.

So forth we went to the toure of Science,
For to attayne in every artike poole.
And first Doctryne by good experience
Unto dame Grammer did sette me to scoole,
Of mysty ignoraunce to oppres the dole;
And so I ascended unto dame Logyke,
And after her unto lusty Rethorike.

Tyll at the last, at a feast solemply
To a temple I went, dame Musike to heare
Play on her organs with swete armony;
But than on lofte I saw to me appeare
The floure of comforte, the sterre of vertue clere,
Whose beaute bright into my herte did passe,
Lyke as fayre Phebus doth shyne in the glasse.

So was my herte by the stroke of love
With sorow prest, and with mortall payne;
That unneth I myght from the place remove,
Where as I stode I was so take certayne,
Yet up I loked to se her agayne,
And at aventure with a sory moode,
Up than I went where as her person stode.

And first of all my herte gan to lerne
Right well to register in remembraunce,
How that her beautie I might than decerne,
From top to to endued with pleasaunce,
Which I shall shew withouten variaunce;
Her shining here so properly she dresses
Alofe her forehed with fayre golden tresses.

Her forehead stepe, with fayre browes ybent,
Her eyen gray, her nose streyght and fayre,
In her whyte chekes the fayre bloud it went
As among the whyte the rede to repayre:
Her mouth right small, her breth swete of ayre,
Her lyppes softe and ruddy as a rose,
No hert on lyve but it wold him appose.

Wyth a lyttle pytte in her well-favored chynne;
Her necke longe as whyte as ony lylly,
With vaynes blew in which the blode ran inne;
Her paypes round and therto right prety;
Her armes sclender and of goodly body;
Her fingers small and therto right longe,
White as the milke, with blew vaynes among.

Her fete proper, she gartered well her hose,
I never saw so swete a creature;
Nothing she lacketh as I do suppose,
That is longing to fayre dame Nature;
Yet more over her countenaunce so pure,
So swete, so lovely, wold my hert inspyre,
Wyth fervent love to attayne his desyre.

But what for her maners passeth all,
She is both gentyll, good, and vertuous;
Alas! what fortune did me to her call
Without that she be to me piteous?
With her so fettered in paynes dolorous,
Alas! shall pite be from her exyled,
Which all vertues hath so undefiled?

Thus in my mynde whan I had engraved
Her goodly countenaunce and fayre figure,
It was no wonder that I was amased,
My herte and minde she had so tane in cure.
Nothing of love I durst to her discure;
Yet for bicause I was in her presence,
I toke acquaintaunce of her excellence.

My herte was drenched in great sorow depe,
Though outwardly my countenaunce was lyght;
The inward wo into my hert did crepe,
To hide my payne it was great force and myght.
Thus her swete Beaute with a soden sight
My hert hath wounded, which much nedes obey
Unto such a sorow, alas, welawaye!

For she is gone, and departed right ferre,
In her countre where she doth abyde;
She is now gone, the fayre shining sterre!
O lady Venus! I pray the provide
That I may after at the morow tide,
And by the way, with hert rigorous,
To subdue mine enemies contrarious.

And yet thy grace moost humbly I pray,
To send thy sonne lytle Cupide before,
With loving letters as fast as thou may,
That she may know somewhat of my paynes sore,
Which for her sake I suffer evermore.
Now, lady Venus, with my hole intent
Of lyfe or death I byde the judgement.

Well than, sayd Venus, I have perseveraunce
That you know somewhat of mighty power
Which to my court sue for my quayntaunce,
To have release of your great paynes sower.
Abyde a whyle, ye must tary the hower;
The time renneth toward right fast:
Joy cometh after whan the sorow is past.

Alas! I sayd, who is fettered in chaynes
He thinketh long after delyveracion
Of his great wo and eke mortall paynes;
For who abideth paynfull penaunce
Thinketh a short whyle a longe contynuaunce;
Who may not speke with her he loveth best,
It is no wonder though he take no rest.

Abyde, quod she; you must a while yet tary,
Though to have comfort ye right long do thinke:
I shall provide for you a lectuary,
Which after sorow into your herte shall sinke.
Though you be brought now unto dethes drynke,
Yet drede exile and lyve in hope and trust,
For at the last you shall attayne your lust.

And specially I gyve to you a charge
To fyxe your love, for to be true and stable
Upon your lady, and not to fle at large
As in sundry wise for to be variable,
In corrupt thoughtes vyle and culpable;
Prepence nothing unto her dishonesty,
For love dishonest hath no certaynte.

And sithen that I was cause you be gone
Fyrst for to love, I shall a letter make
Unto your lady, and send it by my sonne,
Lytle Cupyde, that shall it to her take,
That she your sorow may detray or slake.
Her harded herte it shall well revolve,
Wyth pyteous wordes that shall it dissolve.

And right anon, as the mater foloweth,
She caused Sapyence a letter to wryte;
Lo! what her favour unto me avayleth
Whan for my selfe she did so well indite,
As I shall shew in a short respyte
The gentyll fourme and tenour of her letter,
To spede my cause for to attayne the better.

CAP. XXXI.

THE COPY OF THE LETTER THAT VENUS SENT TO
LA BELL PUCELL.

RIGHT gentyll herte of grene flouring age,
The sterre of beute and of famous porte,
Consyder well that your lusty courage
Age of his cours must at the last transporte:
Now trouth of his right dooth our selfe exhorte
That you your youth in ydelnes wyll spende,
Wythouten pleasure to bryng it to an ende.

What was the cause of your creacion,
But man to love, the world to multely?
As to sow the sede of generacion,
Wyth fervent love so well conveniently,
The cause of love engendreth perfyte,
Upon an entent of dame Nature,
Which you have made so fayre a creature!

Than of dame Nature what is the entent
But to accomplyshe her fayre sede to sow?
In such a place as is convenient,
To Gods pleasure, for to increase and grow.
The kinde of her ye may not overthrow:
Say what ye lyst, ye can nothing deny,
But otherwhyle ye thinke full prively

What the man is, and what he can do
Of chambre werke, as nature can agre,
Though by experience ye know nothing therto,
Yet oft ye muse, and thinke what it may be.
Nature provoketh of her strong degre,
You so to as hath bene her olde guyse;
Why wyll you than the true love dispyse?

In our court there is a byll presented
By Graund Amour, whose hert in dures
You fast have fettered, not to be absented
Frome your person with mortall hevynes:
His hert and service, with all gentylnes,
He to you oweth, as to be obedient
For to fulfyll your swete commaundement.

What you avayleth your beaute so fayre,
Your lusty youth and your gentill countenaunce,
Without that you in your minde will repayre
It for to spend in joye and plesaunce?
To folow the trace of dame Natures daunce;
And thus in doing you shall your servaunt hele,
Of his disease and hurte you never a dele.

One must you love, it can not be denied,
For harde it is to voyde you of the chaunce
Than to love him best that you have so arayed
Wyth fyry chaynes fettered in penaunce;
For he is redy without doubtaunce
In every thing for to fulfyll your wyll,
And as ye lyst ye may him save or spyll.

Alas! what payne and mortall wo
Were it to you and you were in lyke cace,
Wyth him dismayde which you have rayed so;
Wold you not than thinke it a longe space
In his swete herte to have a dwellyng place?
Than in your minde you may revolve that he
Moost longe do thinke that joyfull day to se.

Is not he yonge, both wyse and lusty,
And eke descended of the gentyll lyne?
What wyll you have more of him truely,
Than you to serve as true love wyll inclyne?
But, as I thinke, you do now determine
To fyxe your minde for worldly treasure,
Though in your youth ye lese your pleasure.

Alas! remember first your beaute,
Your youth, your courage, and your tender herte;
What payne hereafter it may to you be
Whan you lacke that which is true lovers deserte;
I tell you this your selfe to converte,
For lytle know ye of this payne ywys,
To lyve with him in whome no pleasure is.

Where that is love, there can be no lacke;
Eye on that love for the land or substaunce,
For it must nedes right soone abacke
Whan that youth hath no joye nor pleasaunce
In the party with natures suffisaunce;
Than wyll you, for the sinne of averiche,
Unto your youth do such a prejudice?

Thus, sithen Nature hath you well indued
With so much beaute; and dame Grace also
Your vertuous maner hath so well renued;
Exyle Disdayne and let her from you go,
And also Straungenes, and to love the fo;
And let no covetous your true herte subdue,
But that in joye you may your youth ensue.

For of I love the goddes dame Venus,
Right well to know that in the world is none
That unto you shall be more joyous
Than Graund Amour, that loveth you alone;
Sith he so did, it is many dayes agone.
Who ever saw a fayre yong hart so harde,
Which for her sake wolde se her true love mard?

And so shall he, without ye take good hede,
If it so be ye be cause of the same,
For love with deth wyll ye reward his mede?
And if ye do ye be to mucche to blame.
To love unloved ye know it is no game:
Wherfore, me thinke, ye can do no lesse
But with your love his paynes to redres.

If ye do not, this may be his songe;
Wo worth the time that ever he you met;
Wo worth your hert so doing him wrong;
Wo worth the houre that his true herte was set;
Wo worth dysdayne that wold his purpose let;
Wo worth the flour that can do no bote;
Wo worth you that perst him at the route.

Wo worth my love, the cause of my sorow;
Wo worth my lady that wyll not it releace;
Wo worth fortune both even and morow;
Wo worth trouble that shall have no peace;
Wo worth cruelte that may never cease;
Wo worth youth that wyll not pitie have;
Wo worth her that wyll not her love save;

Wo worth the trust without assuraunce;
Wo worth love rewarded with hate;
Wo worth love replete with variaunce;
Wo worth love without a frendly mate;
Wo worth the herte with love at debate;
Wo worth the beaute which toke me in snare;
Wo worth the hert that wyll not cease my care;

Wo worth her maners and her goodlynnes;
Wo worth her eyes so clere and amyable;
Wo worth such cause of my great sicknes;
Wo worth pite on her not tendable;
Wo worth her minde in disdayne so stable;
Wo worth her that hath me fettered fast;
And wo worth love that I do spend in wast.

Wherefore of right I pray you to remembre
All that I wryte unto you right now:
How your true love is of age but tendre,
His umble service we pray you alow:
And he him selfe evermore emprowe,
You for to please and give the soveraynte,
How can you have a more true love than he?

And fare ye well: there is no more to say;
Under our signet, in our court ryall,
Of September the two and twenty day.
She closed the letter, and to her did call
Cupyde her sonne, so dere and speciall,
Commaunding him, as fast as he myght,
To La Belle Pucell for to take his flyght.

So did Cupyde with the letter flye
Unto La Belle Pucelles dominacion,
There that he spedde full well and wonderly,
As I shall after make relacion.
But to my matter with brevyacion:
A turtle I offred for to magnefy
Dame Venus hye estate to glorify.

She me exhorted for to be right hardy,
Forth on travayle, and to drede nothing;
I toke my leve of her full humbly,
And on my way as I was riding
This Godfrey Gobelyve came rennyng,
Wyth his little nagge, and cryed: tary! tary!
For I wyll come and bere you company.

CAP. XXXII.

HOW GODFREY GOBELIVE WAS TAKEN OF CORRECTION,
AND PUNYSHED.

AND for because that I was than full sadde
And by the way he made me good game;
To have his company I was somewhat gladde.
I was not proude, I toke of him no shame:
He came to me and sayd: Ye are to blame
So to ryde louring for a womans sake,
Unto the devyll I do them all betake.

They be not stedfast, but chaunge as the mone;
Whan one is gone, they love another sone.
Who that is single and wyll have a wyfe,
Right out of joy he shall be brought in stryfe.
Thus whan Godfrey did so mery make,
There did a lady us sone overtake,
And in her hand she had a knotted whyp;
At every yerte she made Godfrey to skyppe.
Alas! he sayd, that ever I was borne;
Now am I take for all my mocke and scorne!
I loked about whan that I herde hym crye,
Seing this lady on her palfray ryde hie:
Madame, I sayde, I pray you me tell
Your proper name, and where that you dwell?
My name, quod she, is called Correccion;
And the toure of Chastite is my mancyon.
This strong thefe, called False Reporte,
Wyth Vylayne Courage, and an other sorte

And vyle perlers False Conjecture,
All these I had in pryson full sure.
But this False Reporte hath broken pryson,
With his subtyl crafte and evyl treason,
And this journey prively to spede
He hath clad him in this fooles wede.
Now have I answered you your question,
And I pray you of a lyke solucion ;
You seme, me thinke, for to be a knight;
I pray you first to tell me your name aryght.
My name, quod I, is La Graund Amour.
A! well, quod she, you are the perfite floure
Of al true lovers, as I do wel know;
You shall attayne La Belle Pucell, I trow.
I know right well ye are adventurous,
Onward your way to the toure peryllous;
And for as much as the night is nere,
I humbly pray you for to take the chere
That I may make you in my toure this night:
It is here by, you shall of it have a sight.
And I pray you to helpe me to bynde
This False Reporte, as you should do by kynde.
What! Godfrey, quod I, wyll you chaunge your name?
Nay, nay, quod he, it was for no shame;
But, alas! for wo, that she hath me taken!
I must obey, it can not be forsaken.
His fete were fettered underneth his nagge,
And bound his handes behinde to his bagge;
Thus Correction, with her whyp did dryve
The litle nagge wyth Godfrey Gobelyve
Tyll at the last we gan to approche
Her riall tour upon a craggy roche.
The night was come, for it was right late;

Yet right anone we came unto the gate,
Where we were let in by dame Measure,
That was a fayre and a goodly creature.
And so Correccion brought me to the hall,
Of gete well wrought, glased with cristall;
The rofe was golde, and amiddes was set
A carbuncle that was large and great,
Whose vertue clere in the hall so bryght
About did cast a great mervaylous lyght.
So forth we went unto a chamber fayre,
Where many ladies did them selfe repayre,
And at our coming than incontinent
They welcomed us as was convenient.
But of Correccyon they were very glad,
Which False Reporte agayne take had.
There was quene Phantasyle with Penalape,
Quene Helayne and quene Menelape,
Quene Ythesile and quene Prosperine,
The lady Meduse and yong Polixine;
With many mo that I do not rehearse:
My time is short, I must from them reverse.
And dame Correccion into a chambre ledde
Me right anone, for to go to my bedde.
What nede I shew of my great chere and rest?
I wanted nought, but had all of the best.
And so I slept tyll that Aurora clere
Began to shyne amiddes the golden spere.
Than up I rose, and my verlet also,
Which made me redy, and to my stede did go;
And dame Correccion, at the morow tyde,
Did me entreat a while to abyde;
And right anone my breakfast was brought,
To make me chere there wanted right nought.

And after this, dame Correccion
Did lede me to a mervaylous dongen:
And first she led me to the upper ward,
Where Shamefastnes did us well regarde,
For he was gayler, and had at his charge
Every rebell not for to go at large.
In the first ward there wente to and fro
Both men and women might no further go,
But yet they hoped for to have releve
Of theyr imprison which did them so greve.
These prisoners, whan true love was meved,
They wold dryve of and release the greved;
And for this cause, by egal judgement,
Lyke as they did, here hath they punishment.
And Shamefastnes lower did us bring
Where we saw men in great tormenting,
With many ladies, that their mouthes gagged;
And Fales Reporte on me his head wagged.
Than right anone a lady gan to scrape
His furred tonge, that he cryed lyke an ape;
And, vyle peller, in lykewyse also,
His tonge was scraped that he suffered wo;
And yet we went into a depe vale,
Where I saw men that were in great bale,
In holly bushes they did hange aloft,
Theyr hedes downeward for to fall unsofte;
And two ladyes dyde theyr bodyes bete,
With knotted whyppes in the flesshe to frete,
That the desyre it sholde sone aswage
And specially of the Vylayne Courage.
These men, with sugred mouthes so eloquente,
A maydens herte coude ryght sone relente,
And these yonge madens for to take in snare

They fayne greate wo and for to suffer care:
The folyshe maydens dyd byleve they smarted,
That to theyr wyll the men them converted:
Thus whan that they had them so begyled,
And with theyr fraude these maydens defyled,
They cast them of; they toke no lenger kepe;
Go where ye lyst, though they crye and wepe;
Therefore these ladyes, wyth theyr whyppes harde,
Theyr bodyes bete that theyr bodyes had marde.
And every man as he hath deserved
A payne there is whiche is for hym observed.
Thus whan I had all the pryson sene,
With the tourmente of many a one I wene,
And forthe we wente agayne to the hall;
My stede was redy and brought to the wall,
And of the ladyes clere in excellence
I toke my leve, with all due reverence,
And thanked Correccyon, with my herte entere,
Of my repose and of her lovyng chere.
To me she sayd: Remembre you well
Of the swete Beaute of La Belle Pucell,
Whan you her herte in fetters have chayned,
Let her have yours in lykewyse retayned;
Loke that your herte, your worde, and countenaunce,
Agre all in one without varyaunce.
Yf she for pyte do release your payne,
Consyder it and love her best agayne.
Be true and secrete, and make none advaunte
Whan you of love have a perfyte graunte.
And if ye wyll come unto your wyll,
Both here and se and than holde you styll.
Drede you nothing, but take a good herte,
For right sone after you from hens departe

Right high adventures unto you shall fall.
In tyme of fight unto your mind than call,
If you prevayle you shall attayne the fame
Of hye honour to certify the same.
And therewith I lyght upon my stede.
Madame, I sayd, I pray God do you mede!
Farewell! she sayd, for you must now hens,
Aduē, quod I, with all my diligens.

CAP. XXXIII.

HOW GRAUNDE AMOURE DYSCOMFYTED THE GIAUNTE WITH
THRE HEDES, AND WAS RECEIVED OF
THRE FAYRE LADIES.

WHAN golden Phebus in the Capricorne
Gan to ascend fast unto Aquary,
And Janus Bifrus the crowne had wone
With his frosty berd in January;
Whan clere Diana joyned with Mercury,
The cristall ayre and assured firmanent
Were all depured without encumbrement.

Forth than I rode, at myne owne adventure,
Over the mountaynes and the craggy roche;
To beholde the countrees I had great pleasure,
Where corall growed by right hye flackes;
And the popyngayes in the tre toppes;
Than as I rode I sawe me beforne
Besyde a welle hange both a shelde and horne.

Whan I came there, adowne my stede I lyght,
And the fayre bugle I right well behelde;
Blasyng the armes as well as I myghte
That was so graven upon the goodly shelde;
Fyrst all of sylver dyd appere the felde,
With a rampyng lyon of fyne golde so pure,
And under the shelde there was this scripture:

Yf ony knyght that is adventurous
Of his great pride dare the bugle blowe,
There is a gyaunte bothe fyerce and rygorous
That wyth his might shall hym soun overthrowe.
This is the waye as ye shall now knowe
To La Belle Pucell, but withouten fayle
The sturdy gyaunte wyll geve you batayle.

Whan I the scripture ones or twyes hadde redde,
And knewe therof all the hole effecte,
I blewe the horne without any drede,
And toke good herte all fare to abjecte,
Makyng me redy, for I dyde suspecte
That the great gyaunte unto me wolde hast
Whan he had herde me blowe so loude a blast.

I alyght anone upon my gentyll stede,
About the well then I rode to and fro,
And thought ryght well upon the joyfull mede
That I shoulde have after my payne and wo;
And on my lady I dyd thynke also:
Tyll at the last my varlet dyd me tell,
Take hede, quod he, here is a fende of hell!

My greyhounds leped and my stede did sterte,
My spere I toke and did loke aboute;
Wyth hardy courage I did arme me herte;
At last I saw a sturdy giaunt stoute,
Twelve fote of length to fere a great route,
Thre hedes he had, and he armed was
Both hedes and body all about with bras.

Upon his first head in his helmet crest
There stode a fane of the silke so fyne,
Where was wrytten, with letters of the best,
My name is Falshed, I shall cause enclyne
My neyghbours goods for to make them myne :
Alway I get theyr lande or substaunce,
With subtyll fraude, deceyte, or variaunce.

And whan a knyght with noble chyvalry
Of La Bell Pucell should attayne the grace,
Wyth my great falshed I werke so subtylly
That in her herte he hath no place:
Thus of his purpose I do let the cace.
This is I my power and my condicion,
Love to remove by great illusion.

And of the second head, in a silken tassell,
There I saw wrytten: Ymaginacion;
My crafty wytte is withouten fayle
Love for to bring in perturbacion;
Where La Bell Pucell wold have affeccion
To Graund Amour, I shall a tale devyse
To make her hate him and him to dispyse.

By my false wytte so muche imaginative
The trouth full ofte I bring in disease;
Whereas was peace I cause to be stryfe;
I wyll suffer no man for to lyve in ease;
For if by fortune he wyll be displease,
I shall of him ymagin such a tale,
That out of joy it shall turne into bale.

And on the thirde hede, in a stremer grene,
There was written: My name is Perjury;
In many a towne I am knowen as I wene,
Where as I lyst I do great injury,
And do forswere my selfe full wrongfully:
Of all thinges I do hate conscience.
But I love lucre with all diligence.

Betwene two lovers I do make debate;
I will so swere, that they thinke I am true;
For ever falshed with his owne estate
To a lady cometh, and sayeth to eschew
An inconvenience that ye do not rue;
Your love is nought ymaginacion knoweth;
I swere in lykewise and anon she troweth.

That we have sayd is of very trouth,
Her love she casteth right clene out of minde;
That with her love she is wonderly wroth;
With fayned kindnes we do her so blynde,
Than to her lover she is full unkinde.
Thus our thre powers were joyned in one,
In this mighty giaunt many dayes agone.

And whan that I had sene every thinge,
My spere I charged that was very great,
And to this giaunt so fyersly coming
I toke my course, that I with him mette,
Breking my spere upon his first helmet.
And right anone adowne my stede I lyght,
Drawing my swerde that was fayre and bryght,

Iclyped Clara Prudence, that was fayre and sure.
At the giaunt I stroke with all my vyolence,
But he my strokes might right well endure
He was so great and huge of puyssaunce;
His glave he did agaynst me advaunce,
Whiche was foure fote and more of cuttyng;
And as he was his stroke dischargyng,

Because his stroke wys hevy to beare
I lept asyde from hym full quickly,
And to him I ran without any feare.
Whan he had discharged agayne full lightly,
He rored loude, and sware I should abyde,
But what for that? I stroke at him fast,
And he at me, but I was not agast.

But as he faught he had a vauntage,
He was right hye and I under him low;
Tyll at the last, with lusty courage
Upon the side I gave him such a blow
That I right nere did him overthrow,
But right anone he did his might enlarge,
That upon me he did such a stroke discharge,

That unneth I might make resistaunce
Agayng his power, for he was so stronge.
I dyd defend me agaynst his vyolence,
And thus the battayll dured right longe;
Yet evermore I did thinke amonge
Of La Belle Pucell, whom I shold attayne
After my battayles, to release my payne.

And as I loked I saw than overale
Fayre golden Phebus with his beames read,
Than up my courage I began to hale,
Which nigh before was agone and dead.
My swerde so entred that the giaunt blede,
And with my strokes I cut of anone
One of his legges amiddes the thye bone.

Than to the ground he adowne did fall,
And upon me he gan to loure and glum,
Enforcing him so for to ryse withall,
But that I shortly unto hem did cum,
With his thre hedes he spytted all his venum,
And I with my swerde, as fast a coude be,
With all my force cut of his hedes thre.

Whan I had so obteyned the victory,
Unto me than my verlet well sayd:
You have demaunded well and worthely:
My greyhoundes lepte and my stede than brayde,
And than from ferre I saw, well arayed,
To me come ryding thre ladyes swete;
Forth than I rode and did wyth them mete.

The fyrst of them was called Veryte,
And the second Good Operacion,
The thirde and cleped Fydelyte:
All they at ones wyth good opinion
Did geve to me great laudacion,
And me beseched with her hert entere
Wyth them to rest and to make good chere.

I graunted them, and than backward we rode
The mighty giaunt to se and behold,
Whose huge body was more than five carte lode,
Which lay there bleding that was almost colde;
They for his death did thanke me many a fold,
For he to them was enmy mortall,
Wherefore his thre hedes they toke in special.

And than Verite, on the first fane,
Did sette aloft of Falshoed the hede,
And Good Operacion in lykewise had tane
Of Ymaginacion that full sore than bledde
His hede alofte upon his baner rede.
And in likewise Fydelite had served
Perjuries hede, as he had well deserved.

And with swete songes and swete armony
Before me they rode to their fayre castell;
So forth I rode, with great joy and glory,
Unto the place where these ladies did dwell,
Sette on a rocke beside a spryng or a well,
And fayre Observaunce, the goodly portres,
Did us receyve with solempne gladnes.

Than to the chambre, that was very bryght,
They did me lede for to take myne ease,
After my trouble and my great sturdy fight;
But thre woundes I had, causing my disease:
My pane and wo they did sone appease,
And heled my woundes with salves aromatyke,
Telling me of a great giaunt lunatyke,

Whose name truely was called Variaunce,
Whome I should mete after my departyng.
These ladies unto me did great pleasaunce;
And in meane while as we were talking
For me my suppour was in ordeyning;
Thus whan by Temperaunce it was prepared,
And than to it we went and right well fared.

Tell me, quod Veritie, if you be content,
What is your name so hye adventurous,
And who that you into this cost hath sent?
Madame, I sayd, I was so amarus
Of La Belle Pucell so fayre and beauteous,
La Graunde Amoure truely is my name,
Which seke adventures to attayne the same.

A, ha! quod she, I thought as much before,
That you were he, for your great hardines.
La Bell Pucell must love you evermore,
Which for her sake, in your hye nobles,
Doth such actes by chyvalrous excès:
Her gentyl hert may nothing deny
To rewarde your mede with love full fervently.

Thus did we passe time in all maner of joye,
I lacketh nothyng that might make me solace,
But evermore, as noble Troyelus of Troy,
Full ofte I thought on my fayre ladyes face,
And her to se a muche longer space.
When time was come, to rest I was brought,
All to me longyng there lacked right nought.

What should I wade by perambulucion ?
My tyme is shorte and I have farre to sayle
Unto the lande of my conclusion.
The wynde is east, ryght slowe without fayle,
To blowe my shyppe of diligent travayle
To the last ende of my matter troublous,
With waves enclosed so tempestuous.

Ryght in the morowe, when Aurora clere
Her radiaunt beames began for to spreade,
And splendent Phebus, in his golden spere,
The cristalle ayr did make fayre and redde,
Darke Dyane declining pale as any ledde,
When the lytle byrdes swetely dyd syng
Laudes to their maker early in the mornyng.

CAP. XXXIV.

HOW HE MET WITH PERCEVERAUNCE, AND REPOSED HYM
IN THE MANOUR PLACE OF DAME COMFORT.

Up I rose, and did make me ready,
For I thought long unto my journeys ende:
My grahoundes lept on me ryght merely,
To cheare me forward they condescende;
And the thre ladies, my cheare to amende,
A good breakefast did for me ordayne;
They were ryght gladde the gyaunt was slayne.

I toke my leave and on my way I ryde,
Through the woodes and on rockes hye.
I loked about, and on the hyll abode.
Till in the vale I sawe full hastely
To me come ryding a lady sikerly:
I well behelde the hye waye so used,
But of this lady ryght often I mused:

Till at the last we did mete together.
Madame, I sayde, the hye God you save!
She thanked me, and did aske me whether
That I so rode, and what I would have?
Truely, quod I, nothyng els I crave
Of the hye God, but to be so fortunate,
La Bell Pucell to have to my mate.

What is your name ? then sayde she.
La Graunde Amoure, forsothe, madame, quod I.
Then was she glad as any one myght be,
And sayde she was sent fro myne owne lady.
Tidynge, I sayde, I praye you hartely!
Your lady, quod she, is in perfect health,
And would be glad to heare of your wealth.

She promised you in a garden grene
To love you best of any creature;
So doth she yet, as I thynke and wene,
Though that Disdayne brought her to her lure :
But of her harte nowe you shall be sure.
Be of good chere, and for nothyng dismaye,
I spake with her but nowe this other daye,

And she my selfe unto you hath sent;
My name is called dame Perceveraunce.
A little before that I from her went,
To her came Cupide, with great circumstaunce,
And brought a letter of Venus ordinaunce,
Whiche unto her he did anone present.
When she it reade and knewe the entent,

All inwardly full wondersly dismayed,
Withouten worde she did stande right well,
Her harded harte was full well delayed,
What for to do she knewe not good or yll.
You for to helpe or let you so spyll.
Disdayne and Strangenes did stande then therby;
Seing her countenaunce they gan to drawe nye.

Madame, quod they, why are ye so sadde?
Alas! quod she, it is no marvayle why.
Ryght nowe of Cupide a letter I had,
Sent from Venus, full ryght marveylously,
By whiche I have perceyved utterly
That a yong knyght called Graunde Amoure
Doth for my sake suffer suche doloure,

That of constraynte of wofull hevines
He is nere dead all onely for my sake;
Shall he nowe dye, or shall I him relese
Of his great wo and to my mercy take?
Abyde, quod Strangenes, and your sorowe slake:
Have you hym sene in any time before?
Yes, yes, quod she; that doth my wo restore.

At Penticost, nowe many dayes agone,
Musike to heare at great solemnitie,
To and fro he walked him selfe all alone
In a great temple of olde antiquitie;
Tyll that by fortune he had espied me;
And ryght anone, or that I was ware,
To me he came: I knewe nought of his care.

He semeth gentle, his maners ryght good,
I behelde ryght well all his condicion:
Humble of chere and of goodly mode;
But I thought nothyng of his affliction;
But his behaviour sheweth the occasion
Of fervent love, as then in myne entent
I oft dyd deme, and geve a judgement.

So after this I dyd then sone departe
Home to my countrey where I dyd abyde;
When I was gone full heavy was his harte.
As Cupide sayeth, I must for hym provyde
A gentle remedy at this sodayne tyde;
And for my sake he is adventurous
To subdue mine enemies to me contrarious.

A! quod Disdayne, knowe ye his substaunce?
Why wyll you love suche a one as he?
Though he seme gentle and of good governaunce,
You shall have one of farre hyer degre.
He is nothyng mete, as it semeth me,
To be your fere your favour to attayne.
What is it to you though he suffer payne?

Could your selfe let his eyen to have a syght
Of your beauty or his harte to be set,
What skilleth you though that he dye this nyght?
You called hym not when he with you mette;
And he will love you, you can not hym let.
Be as be may, ye shall have myne assent
Him for to forsake as is moste expedient.

Alas! madame, then saide dame Strangenes,
When he cometh hether your courage abate;
Loke hye upon hym; beware of mekenes;
And thinke that you shall have an hie estate.
Let not Graunde Amour saye to you checkmate.
Be straunge unto hym, as ye knowe nothyng
The perfite cause of his true commyng.

And in meane whyle came to her presence
Dame Peace and Mercie, and to her they sayde:
Alas! madame, consyder your excellence,
And howe your beauty hath hym so arayed :
If you have hym ye may be well apayed.
And doubt you not if that ye love for love,
God will sende ryches to come to you above.

Will you for love let hym dye or peryshe,
Whiche loveth you so with fervent desyre?
And you your selfe may his sorowe minishe,
That with your beauty set his harte a fyre.
Your swete lokes did his harte enspire,
That of fyne force he must to you obeye,
To live or dye there is no more to saye.

Alas! quod Peace, wyll ye let him endure
In mortal payne withouten remedy?
Sithen his harte you have so tane in cure,
Your hasty dome loke that ye modefy.
Exile Disdayne and Strangenes shortly,
And sende Perceverance as fast as ye may
To comfort hym in his troublous journey.

Then in her mynde she gan to revolve
The lovyng wordes of Mercy and Peace;
Her hardy harte she gan for to dissolve,
And inwardly she did to me release
Her perfite love your great payne to cease;
And did exile then from her to wyldernes
Bothe dame Disdayne and eke dame Strangenes.

And did me sende to you incontinent,
With this goodly shelde, that ye should it were,
For her swete sake as is convenient.
It is sure; ye shall not nede to feare
The stroke of swerde or yet the grate of spere.
She prayeth you to be of good chere;
Above all men ye are to her moste deare.

Nowe, sayde Perceverance, I pray you repose
This long nyght with my cosen Comfort,
A gentle lady as any may suppose;
She can you tell and also well exhort
Of La Bell Pucell with a true report.
I thanke her of her great goodnes,
And so we rode with joye and gladnes,

Tyll that we came unto a manour place,
Moted about under a woode syde.
Alyght, she sayde, for by ryght long space.
I payne and wo you did ever abyde.
After an ebbe there commeth a flowyng tyde.
So downe I lyght from my goodly stede,
After my payne to have rest for my mede.

Then dame Perceverance on the way me ledde
Into the place, where did us gentilly mete
The Lady Comfort without any dredde,
With countenaunce that was demure and swete;
In goodly maner she dyd us then grete,
Leading us to a chamber precious,
Dulcet of odoure and most solacious.

And pryvely she asked a question,
Of Perceverance, what I called was ?
La Graunde Amoure, without abusion,
Cosen, quod she: he doth all lovers passe;
Like as dothe Phebus in the pure glasse,
So doth his dedes extolle the soverayntie
Of the darke gyauntes by highe auctoritie.

When she it knewe, she was of me ryght fayne;
Nothyng I lacked that was to my plesaunce,
After my travayle and my wofull payne:
Good meate and drynke I had to sustenaunce;
We sate together by long continuaunce,
But evermore Comfort gave exhortacion
To me of pacience in tribulacion.

Thinke well, quod she, that in the worlde is none
Whiche can have pleasure without wo and care;
Joye cometh after, when the payne is gone:
Was never man that was devoyde or bare
Alway of joye after his wofull snare;
Who knoweth payne and hath bene in trouble,
After his wo his joye is to him double.

It may so fortune that La Bell Pucell
Hath divers frendes, that be not content
That her favoure ye should attayne so well;
For you of them she may often be shent,
But what for that? she shall not her repent,
And if her frendes be with you angry,
Suffer their wordes and take it patiently.

Agaynst their yll do unto them good,
Them for to please be alwaye diligent;
So shall you swage the tempesteous floode
Of their stormy myndes so impacient,
And inwardly they shall them selves repent
That they to you have bene contrarious,
In suche fyry anger hote and furious.

Thus by your wisdome ye shall them so wynne
Unto your frendes that dyd you so hate;
For it is reason you should obeye your kynne,
As by obedience both early and late
Make them your frendes without the debate;
For evermore the spirite of pacience
Doth overcome the angry violence.

Be hardy, bolde, and couragious;
For after that ye be gone from hence,
You shall mete with a gyaunt rigorous,
Havyng seven heades of yll experience.
You shall subdue him with your prudence;
And other adventures shall unto you fall,
Whiche Fame shall cause to be memoriall.

When it was tyme, I was brought to bedde,
So all the long nyght I endured in rest;
With suche a slouth i-taken was my heade,
That my soft pyllowe founde a good gest.
For long before I was so opprest
With inwarde trouble that I myght not slepe,
But oft wake and syghe with teares depe.

CAP. XXXV.

HOWE HE VAINQUYSHED A GYAUNT WITH SEVEN HEADES,
AND WAS RECEIVED OF VI. LADYES.

WHEN mornynge came, up anone I rose,
And armed me as fast as I myght,
Forth for to travaile unto my purpose.
I toke my leave and on my stede I lyght;
Thankyng dame Comforte of her chere that nyght;
So, with Perceveraunce, in my company,
Forth on the way we rode full merely

Over the hethe, tyll we sawe from farre
A royall castell ryght strongly fortified,
Bulwarkes about accustomed for warre;
On a craggy roche it was so edified,
Walled with gate so clerely purified,
To whiche we rode, and drewe nere and nere,
Till in our syght did openly appeare

A myghty gyaunt, xv. fote of length,
With heades seven, and armed full sure;
He semed well to be a man of strength.
Then quod Perceveraunce: Ye must put in ure
This daye your power, in honour to endure,
Against this gyaunt your mortall enemy.
Be of good cheare, you shall have victory.

Besydes this gyaunt, upon every tree
I did se hang many a goodly shelde
Of noble knyghtes, that were of hye degre,
Whiche he had slayne and mured in the fiede.
From farre this gyaunt I ryght well behelde;
And towarde hym as I rode my waye,
On his first head I sawe a banner gay,

Wherin was written Dissimulation,
Whose nature false is full of flattery,
That, onder a fayned commendacion,
Can cloke a mocke and fraude full subtilly;
So doth he love deceyve oft pryvely,
For the blinde love doth perceyve ryght nought
That under hony the poyson is wrought.

And on the seconde heade was a banner blewe,
In whiche was written, in letters ryght white,
Delay my name is, that can long eschue
As true lover with my fatall respite,
That love for love shall not him acquite;
For evermore I lye oft in a wayte,
Love to delay and cast hym from consayte.

On the thirde head, in a banner square,
All of reade was wrytten Discomfort,
Causyng a lover for to drowne in care,
That he of love shall have no report,
But loke hye his hart to transport,
And I my selfe shall him so assayle
That he in love shall nothyng prevayle.

On the fourth head, on the helmet crest
There was a stremer ryght white, large and long,
Wheron was written with vyse of the best,
My name is Variaunce, that ever among
The mynde of love doth chaunge with great wrong,
That a true lover can not be certayne
Love for his mede right stedfast to retayne.

And yet aloft on the fift helmet
In a blacke banner was written Envy,
Whose hart ever inwardly is fret
When Graund Amour should attayne his lady.
He museth oft in hym selfe inwardly,
To let the lady for to set her harte
On Graund Amour for to release his smarte.

In a russet banner on the sixt heade
There was wrytten this worde, Detraction,
That can open in a covert stede
His subtile male replete with treason,
To cause a lady to have suspicion
Unto her true lover wyth his bytter tale,
That she her love from him than dyd hale.

On the vii. hede, in a baner of ryches,
Was wrytten, with letters all of Grewe,
My name truly is called Doublenes,
Whyche I do owe unto all ladies true,
At a tyme unware my dette shal be dewe,
To Graunde Amoure for to make him repente,
That he his love on La Bell Pucell spente.

Whan in my minde I had well agregate
Every thinge that I in hym had sene,
Bothe of his head and of his hye estate,
I called for helpe unto the heaven quene.
The day was fayre, the sunne was bright and shene;
Besyde a ryver and a craggy roche
This gyaunt was whyche spyed me approche.

He hurtled aboute, and kest his shelde afore,
And toke his axe of myghty fortytude,
That was of length xx. fote and more,
Whiche he had used by longe consuetude
To daunte true lovers and theyr power exclude.
I toke my spere and did it well charge,
And with hardines I made my force enlarge.

I toke my course and to the gyaunt ranne,
On his seconde head brekyng than asunder
My mighty spere, that he to rore began
Wyth so base a crye that I had great wonder;
His seven heades so rored lyke the thunder.
Ryght frome my stede I light to the grounde,
And drewe Clara Prudence, that was hole and sounde.

The mighty gyaunte his axe did up lyfte,
Upon my head that the stroke should fall.
But I of him was ful ware, and swyfte;
I lept asyde, so that the stroke wythall
In the grounde lyghted besyde a stone wall,
Thre fote and more, and anone than I
Dyd lepe unto hym, strykinge full quyckly.

But above me he had suche altytude
That I at him coulede have no ful stroke.
He stroke at me with many strokes rude,
And called me boye, and gave me many a mocke.
At the last he sayd: I shall geve the a knocke
That wyth thy braynes I shall the trees depaynte.
Abyde, quod I, thou shalt be fyrst ful faynte.

And right anone I bye me spyed
On the rockes syde xii. steppes ful sure,
And than right fast I uppon theim hyed
That we were bothe about one stature:
My strength I doubled, and put so in ure
The great strokes, that I cut of anone
Syxe of his heades, levyng him but one.

Whan he felt him selfe hurt so grevously,
He stretched hym up and lyft his axe a lofte,
Strikinge at me with strokes wondersly;
But I ful swyftly dyd geve backe ful oft.
For to devoyde his great strokes unsoft.
When he sawe thys, he thought him forlore;
Wyth a hedious voyce he began to rore.

The battayle dured betwene us right long,
Tyll I sawe Phebus declinyng full lowe.
I avaunced my swerde that was sure and strong,
And with my myght I gave hym suche a blowe
On his seventh heade, that he dyd overthrowe.
When he was downe he gan to crye and yell,
Ful lyke a serpent or a fende of hell.

When I sawe this, as fast as myght be
Adowne I came, and did then unlace
His seventh helmet, ryght ryche for to see,
And hym beheaded in a ryght shorte space.
And then full soone there came to the place
Perceveraunce and my verlet also;
Alas ! they sayde, we were for you ryght wo.

But we were glad when ye had forsaken
The lowe vale, and up the craggy fayre
For your advauntage the hye waye had taken.
Thus as we talked we did se ladies fayre,
Seven in number, that were debonayre,
Upon white palfreys eche of them dyd ryde,
For us ryght gentylly from the castell syde.

The first of them was named Stedfastnes;
And the seconde Amerous Purveyaunce ;
The thirde was Joye after great heavines ;
The fourth of them was dame Continuaunce ;
And the fift of them called dame Plesaunce ;
The syxte was called Report Famous ;
The seventh, Amitie to lovers dolorous.

And ryght anone, with all humilitie,
They lyght adowne, and then incontinent
Eche after other they came unto me ;
I kyssed them with all my whole entente.
Hayle, knyght ! they sayde, so clere and excellent,
Whiche of this gyaunt, our hydeous enemy,
So worthely hath wonne the victory.

Ladies, he sayde, I am muche unworthy
So to accept your great prayse and fame.
They prayed me to kepe them company:
I will, quod I, or elles I were to blame.
They prayed me to shewe them my name.
La Graunde Amoure it is, I sayde, in dede ;
And then sayde they, No wonder though ye spede.

No doubt it is but ye shall obtayne
La Bell Pucell so ryght fayre and clere ;
We were with her exiled by Disdayne,
And then besyged in this castell here,
With this great gyaunt, more then a whole yeare ;
And you this nyght, if it do you please,
In this pore castell shall take your ease.

I thanked them, and so I rode anone
Into the castell of olde foundation,
Walled about with the blacke touche stone.
I toke there then my recreacion,
Among these ladies with commendacion ;
And when tyme came that they thought best,
To a royall bedde I was brought to rest.

After my wery and troublous travayle
I toke my ease tyll that it was day ;
Then up arose without any fayle,
And made me ready for to ride my waye.
But then anone into the chamber gaye
The seven ladies came with Perceveraunce,
Saiyng they would geve me attendaunce,

And bryng me to La Bell Pucell,
Where that she is in her court royall ;
And lykewyse as Phebus doth hye excell
In bryghtnes truely the fayre starres all,
So in beauty and vertue speciall
She doth excede any earthly creature,
That is now made by fayre dame Nature.

We brake our fast, and we made us ready
To La Bell Pucell on our way to ryde ;
My stede was brought, I lept up shortly,
So did the ladies, they would nothyng abyde.
Thus forth we rode at the morowe tyde
Out of the castell with all joye and pleasure,
Forth on our way at all adventure.

CAP. XXXVI.

HOW HE MADE OBLACYON TO THE GODES PALLAS, AND
SAYLED OVER THE TEMPESTUOUS FLODE.

So long we rode over hill and valey,
Tyll that we came into a wyldernes,
On every syde there wylde beastes laye,
Ryght straunge and fierce in sundry likenes;
It was a place of dissolute darkenes.
The ladies and I were in feare and doubt,
Tyll at the last that we were gotten out

Of the great woode upon a craggy roche,
When cleare Dyana in the Scorpion
Agaynst fayre Phebus began to approche,
For to be at her whole opposition,
We sawe from farre a goodly region,
Where stode a palayce hye and precious,
Beyonde an haven full tempestuous.

Then sayd Perceveraunce ; Beholde ye and se,
Yonder is the palays gay and glorious
Of La Bell Pucelles great humilitie;
A place of pleasure most solacious.
But then we spied a fende fallicious,
Beyond the haven at sure entres
Blowyng out fyre by marveilous wydnes.

The fyre was great, it made the ylande lyght,
He rored loude, it semeth lyke the thonder;
But, as me thought, he was of great myght,
To knowe his likenes we were farre asonder;
But of the fyre we did often wonder;
We asked Perceveraunce what that it myght be.
Alas! quod she, with fraude and subiltie

Of dame Strangenes and of dame Disdayne
When La Bell Pucell did them so abjecte,
Because that they myght not revert agayne,
With mortall Envie they did then coniecte
To make a fende in lykewyse to directe
Syr Graunde Amoure, with the fervent fyre
Of evill treason to let his desyre.

For dame Disdayne, the crafty sorceres,
With arte magyke hath wrought full craftely
Of the vii. metalles a dragon doubtles,
And dame Strangenes, by her nygromancy,
Hath closed therin a fende ryght subtilly,
That the fyre encenseth by great outrage.
But Graunde Amoure shall it well asswage.

Benethe this roche there is well fortified
An olde temple, to the laude and glory
Of wyse dame Pallas it was so edified;
We will ryde unto it full lyghtly,
And do oblacion unto her truely;
She wyll us tell by good experience
Howe we may scape the brennyng vyolence.

So to the temple of dame Pallas
Anone we rode, and did lyght adowne.
Of depured cristall her whole ymage was,
The temple walles were ryght olde and browne;
And then ryght sone before her hyghe renowne
Prostrate we fell mekely to the grounde,
And sodaynly we were cast in a sounde.

Thus as we laye in a deadly chaunce,
We thought to her we made peticion,
And all in Englyshe with long circumstaunce
She shewed us all the whole condicion
Of the marveyulous serpent's operacion,
And did shewe us a perfyte remedy
To withstande all the crafte of sorcery.

And in lykewyse as the maner foloweth,
In depured verses of crafty eloquence,
Every thyng unto us she sheweth;
And first of all with all our diligence
These verses we sayed unto her excellence,
But she with crafty verses eloquent
Gave us an aunswere full expedient.

When golden Phebus in the first houre
Of his owne daye began to domine,
The sorceresse, the false roote of doloure,
All of golde that was so pure and fyne,
Of the best made the head serpentyne,
And eke therof she dyd make his face;
Full lyke a mayde it was, a wonders case!

And every houre, as the planettes raygned,
She made the serpent of the metalles seven;
Till she her purpose had fully attayned,
And when fyve bodies above on the heaven
Wente retrogarde, marveylously to neven,
With divers quartils and the more combust,
In the dragons tayle, to let a lovers lust.

These cursed witches, Disdayne and Straungenes,
Made the monster of a subtile kynde,
To let my purpose and all my gladnes,
But that dame Pallas of her gentle mynde
Of marveylous herbes a remedy did fynde;
And anone a boxe of marveylous oyntment
She toke to me to withstande the serpent.

Thus al esmarveyled we dyd then awake,
And in my hande I had the oyntment,
Closed in a boxe, of whiche I should take
To anoynt my harneis for the serpent,
Whiche shall devoyde his fyre so fervent,
And my swerde also to cause to departe
Astrothe the fende, so set with magykes arte.

Then when the sunne with his beames mery
Began to ryse in the fayre morowe gray,
All about lightyng our emispery,
Exiling mistes and darke clowdes away,
And when we sawe that it was bryght daye,
Nere by the ryvage at the last we spied
A goodly shyppe whiche unto us fast hied.

And ryght by anone the rivage syde,
She cast an anker and did us than hayle
With a peale of gunnes, at the morowe tyde
Her bonet she vayled, and gan to stryke sayle.
She was right large, of thre toppes without fayle;
Her boate she made out, and sent to the lande,
What that we were to knowe and understande,

That so did walke by the ryver coast.
And with two ladyes we sodaynly mette;
So when that they were come to us almoste,
From their shyppe boate curiously counterfayte,
Hayle, knyght! they sayde, nowe from a lady great,
Called dame Pacience, we are hether sent,
To knowe your name and all the whole entent

What you make here, and the ladies all?
Truely, quod I, over this stormy flowde
We woulde have passage nowe in speciall.
Tary, she sayde, it were to you not good:
There is a serpent evill, ryght fierce and woode,
On the other syde, whiche will you devoure.
Nay then, quod I, my name is Graunde Amoure:

I have disconfited the giauntes terrible,
For La Bell Pucell the most fayre ladye;
And for her sake shalbe invincible
Of this great monster to have the victory.
You have, quod they, demeaned you nobly,
And we anone to our lady Pacience
Will geve of you perfyte intelligence.

Thus they departed, and to their boate they went,
And the royall shyppe, yclipped Perfitenes,
They dyd aborde and then incontinent
Unto dame Pacience they gan to expresse
Myne name, mine actes, and all my prowes.
Ha, ha! quod she, howe glad may I nowe be,
Whiche in this place may him both heare and se.

And in great haste she made them rowe agayne
Towarde the lande, with all due reverence
For to receyve me and the ladies certayne.
And so we then, with all our diligence,
Entred the boate without resistance,
And did aborde then perfitenes so sure,
Whiche the great waves might ryght well endure.

And Pacience, with great solemnitie,
Did me receyve, and the ladies also.
Welcome! she sayd, by hye auctoritie,
I am ryght gladde that it hath happened so,
That La Bell Pucell must redresse your wo,
And on your selfe, with your worthy dedes,
Of fame and her hath wonne ryght hie medes.

And then their anker they weyed in haste,
And hoyst their sayle, when many a clarion
Began to blowe; the mornyng was past,
But Afrycus Auster made surreccion,
Blowyng his bellowes by great occasion;
So forthe we sayled right playne southwest,
On the other syde where the serpent did rest.

CAP. XXXVII.

HOVE GRAUNDE AMOURE DISCOMFITED THE WONDERFULL
MONSTER OF THE SEVEN METALLES, MADE
BY ENCHAUNTMENT.

AND at the lande we aryved than,
With all the ladies in my company,
Whiche for to pray for me sodaynly began
To the God Mars, lodestarre of chyvalrye.
I toke my leave of them full gentlylly,
And ryght anone to fynde out my fo,
This mortall dragon, I went to and fro.

Tyll at the last, beside a craggy roche,
I sawe the dragon whiche did me espie,
And nere and nere, as I gan to approche,
I behelde his head with his great body,
Which was mishaped ful right wonderly;
Of gold so shene was both his head and face;
Full lyke a mayden; it was a mervaylous cace!

His necke silver, and thicke as a bull;
His breste stele, and like an olyphant;
His forelegges latyn, and of fethers full;
Ryght lyke a grype was every tallaunt;
And as of strength he nothing did want,
His backe afore, lyke brystles of a swyne,
Of the fine copper did moost clerely shyne.

His hinder legges was like to a catte,
All of tynne, and like a scorpion;
He had a tayle wyth a head therat,
All of leade, of plyaunt facion;
His herte stele, without menission.
Toward me he came, roring like the thonder,
Spytting out fyre, for to se greate wonder.

In his forehead, with letters of Grewe,
Was wrytten: My name is Malyce prevy,
That olde debate can full sone renewe
Betwene true lovers wyth colour crafty.
Agaynst Graund Amoure I shall so fortify
My evell subtell power, and cursed courage,
To let hym trulye of his hye passage.

I toke my boxe, as Pallas commaunded,
And my sworde and sheld, with al my armure,
In every place I right well anoynted,
To hardines she toke my herte in cure;
Makinge me redy, and whan I thought me sure,
I toke my swerde, and with an hardy herte
Towarde the dragon I began to sterte.

And as I gan my grete stroke to charge,
He blew out so much fyre innumerable,
That on the ground I did my might discharge;
The smoke was derke, full gretely damageable,
And the hote fyre was so intollerable,
Above me fleying, that unneth I might
Through my visure cast abroad my sight.

But the swete oyntmente had suche a vertue,
That the wilde fyre might nothing endamage
Me through hete, for it did extue
The magikkes arte with greate advantage,
Causing the fyre right wel to asswage;
And wyth my swerde, as nothing agast,
Upon the serpente I did stryke full fast.

His body was great as any tunne,
The devyll about did his body beare;
He was as egre as grype or lyon,
So was his tallantes he did my herneys tere,
That ofte he put me in a mortall fere.
Tyll at the last I did his body perce
With my good swerde, he might it not reuerce.

Ryght ther wythall the dragon to-brast,
And out there flew, ryght blacke and tedyous,
A foule Ethyope, which such smoke did cast,
That all the ylond was full tenebrous;
It thondred loude wyth clappes tempestious.
Then all the ladyes were full sore adred,
They thought none other but that I was ded.

The spiryte vanished, the ayre waxed clere;
Then did I loke and beholde aboute
Wher was the toure of my lady so dere;
Tyll at the last I had espyed it oute,
Set on a rocke right hie, without doubte,
And all the ladies, wyth Perseveraunce,
To me did come with joye and pleausaunce.

Forsoth, quod they, you are muche fortunate,
So to subdue the serpent venomous,
Which by sorcery was surely ordinate
You for to sle with fyre so vicious.
Blessed be Pallas, the goddes glorious,
Which that thou taught a perfyte remedy,
For to devoyde the crafte of sorcery.

It was no wonder though that I was glad,
After the payne and tribulacion
That in many places I right often had,
For to attayne the hye promocion
Of La Bell Pucelles dominacion;
Considering in my passage daungerous
All I subdued to me contrarious.

And than right sone, with great solempnite,
 So forth we rode to the solempane mancion
 Of La Belle Pucelles worthy dignite;
 Whiche was a toure of mervaylous facion,
 Replete with joy without suggestion,
 Walled with sylver, and many a story
 Upon the wall enameled ryally.

So at the last we came unto the gate,
 Whiche all of sylver was knotted proprely;
 Where was a lady of ryght hye estate,
 Whiche us receyved well and nobly.
 And than Perceveraunce went full shortly
 To La Belle Pucell, shewynge every thyng
 Of myne adventure and sodayne comynge.

CAP. XXXVIII.

HOW GRAUNDE AMOURE WAS RECEYVED OF
 LA BELLE PUCELL.

WHAN she it knewe, than right incontynente
 She called to her Peace and dame Mercy,
 With Justice, and Reason the lady excellent,
 Pleasaunce, Grace, wyth good dame Memory,
 To wayte upon her full ententyfely;
 Me to receyve wyth all solempane joye,
 Adowne her chamber she went on her waye.

And in the meane while the gentle porteres,
Called Countenaunce, on my way then me lede,
Into the basse courte of greate wydenes,
Where all of golde there was a conduyte hede,
With many dragons enameled with reed,
Whiche dyde spoute oute the dulcet lycoure,
Lyke cristall clere, with aromatyke odoure.

Alofte the basse toure foure ymages stode,
Whiche blewe the clarions well and wonderly.
Alofte the toures the golden fanes goode
Dyde with the wynde make full swete armony,
Them for to here it was great melody.
The golden toures with cristall clarefied
About were glased moost clerely purefyed.

And the gravell whereupon we wente,
Ful lyke the gold that is moost pure and fyne,
Withouten spotte of blacke encombremente
Aboute oure fete it dyde ryghte clerely shyne;
It semed more lyke a place celestyne,
Than an erthly mansion, whiche shall away
By longe tyme and proces an other day.

And towarde me I dyde se than comynge
La Belle Pucell, the moost fayre creature
Of ony fayre erthely person lyvyng,
Whiche with me mette with chere so demure.
Of the shynyng golde was all her vesture;
I dyd my duty, and ones or twyse ywys
Her lyppes soft I did full swetely kys.

Aha! quod she, that I am very fayne
That you are come, for I have thought long
Sithen the time that we parted in twayne,
And for my sake you have had often wronge;
But your courage so hardy and strong,
Hath caused you for to be victorious
Of your enmyes so much contrarious.

Wyth her fayre hand, white as ony lilly,
She dyd me lede into a ryall hall,
With knottes kerved full right craftely,
The windowes fayre glased with crystall,
And all about, upon the golden wall,
There was enameled, with figures curious,
The syege of Troye so hard and dolorous.

The flore was paved with precious stones,
And the rofe of mervaylous geometry,
Of the swete sypres wrought for the nones,
Encencing out the yll odours mysty;
Amyddes the rofe there shone full wonderly
A poynted dyamonde of mervaylous bygnes,
With many other greate stones of ryches.

So up we wente, to a chambre fayre,
A place of pleasure and delectacyon,
Strowed with floures flagraunte of ayre,
Without ony spotte of perturbacyon.
I behelde ryght well the operacyon
Of the mervaylous rofe set full of rubyes,
And tynst with saphers and many turkeys.

The walles were hanged with golden aras,
Whiche treated well of the syege of Thebes.
And yet all about us depured was
The cristallyne wyndowes of great bryghtnes.
I can nothyng extende the goodlynnes
Of this palays, for it is impossyble
To shewe all that unto me vysyble.

But La Belle Pucell full ryght gentyllly
Dyde sytte adowne by a wyndowes syde,
And caused me also full swetely
By her to sytte at that gentyll tyde.
Whelcome! she sayd, ye shall with me abyde,
After your sorowe to lyve in joye and blysse;
You shall have that ye have deserved ywys.

Her redolente wordes of swete influence
Degouted vapoure moost aromatyke,
And made conversyon of complacence;
Her depured and her lusty rethoryke
My courage reformed, that was so lunatyke;
My sorowe defeted, and my mynde dyde modefy,
And my dolorous herte began to pacyfy.

All thus my love we gan to devyse,
For eche of other were ryght joyous.
Than at the last in a mervaylous wyse
Full sodaynly there came unto us
Lyteil Cupyde with his mother Venus,
Which was well cladde in a fayre mantyll blewe,
With golden hertes that were perst anewe.

And rounde about us she her mantyll cast,
Sayeng that she and her sone Cupyde
Wolde us conjoyne in mariage in hast;
And to lete knowe all youre courte soo wyde,
Sende you Perseveraunce before to provyde,
To warne your ladyes for to be redy,
To morowe betyme ryght well and solemply.

We answered bothe our hertes were in one,
Sayeng that we dyde ryght well agre,
For all our foes were added and gone.
Ryght gladde I was that joyfull day to se;
And than anone, with grete humylytie,
La Bell Pucell to a fayre chambre bryght,
Dyde me than brynge for to rest all nyght.

And she toke her leve, I kyst her lovely.
I wente to bedde, but I coude not slepe,
For I thought so moche upon her inwardly,
Her moost swete lokes in to my herte dyde crepe,
Percynge it through with a wounde so depe;
For Nature thought every houre a daye
Tyll to my lady I sholde my dette well paye.

CAP. XXXIX.

OF THE GRETE MARIAGE BETWENE GRAUNDE AMOURE AND
LA BELLE PUCCELL.

THAN Perceveraunce, in all goodly hast,
Unto the steward called Liberalite
Gave warning for to make redy fast
Agaynst this time of great solemnitie,
That on the morow halowed should be:
She warned the cooke called Temperaunce,
And after that the ewres Observaunce.

With Pleasaunce the paynter and dame Curtesy,
The gentyll butler with the ladies all,
Eche in her office was prepared shortly
Agaynst this feast so much tryumphall.
And La Belle Pucell then in speciall
Was up betime in the morow gray,
Right so was I, whan I sawe the daye.

And ryght anone La Belle Pucell me sente,
Agaynst my wedding, of the satyn fyne,
Whyte as the milke, a goodly garment,
Branded with perle that clerely did shyne;
And so the mariage for to determyne
Venus me brought to a ryall chappell,
Which of fyne golde was wrought every dele.

And after that the gay and glorious
La Belle Pucell to the chappell was ledde,
In a white vesture fayre and precious,
Wyth a golden chaplet on her yalow hede;
And Lex Ecclesie did me to her wedde;
After which wedding there was a great feast,
Nothing we lacked, but had of the best.

What should I tary by longe continuaunce
Of the fest, for of my joye and pleasure
Wysdom can judge withouten variaunce,
That nought I lacked as ye may well be sure,
Payeng the swete due det of nature;
Thus with my lady was so fayre and clere,
In joy I lived full right many a yere.

O, lusty youth and yong tender herte!
The true company of my lady bryght,
God let us never from other asterte,
But all in joy to lyve both day and nyght!
Thus after sorow joy aryveth aright:
After my payne I had sporte and play;
Full lytell thought I that it should decaye.

Tyll that dame Nature naturing had made
All thinge to grow to theyr fortitude,
And nature naturing waxte retrogarde,
By strength my youth so far to exclude,
As was ever her olde consuetude;
First to augment, and then to abate,
This is the custome of her hye estate.

CAP. XL.

HOW WHAN GRAUNDE AMOURE HAD LIVED LONGE WYTH LA
 BEL PUCELL, HE WAS ARRESTED BY AEGE, THAT BROUGHT
 UNTO HIM POLYCY AND AVARYCE.

THUS as I lived in such pleasure gladde,
 Into the chamber came full prively
 A fayre olde man, and in his hand he hadde
 A croked staffe; he wente full wekely:
 Unto me than he came full softly,
 And with his staffe he toke me on the brest,
 Obey! he sayd, I must you nedes areste.

My name is Age, which have often sene
 The lusty youth perysh unhappely,
 Through the desert of the selfe I wene;
 And evermore I do thinke inwardly,
 That my dedes of you they were of great folly,
 And thou thy selfe right joyous may be
 To lyve so longe to be lyke to me.

Happy is they that may well overpasse
 The narrow bridge over fragilite
 Of his wanton youth, brytle as the glasse;
 For the youth is open to all fraylte,
 Redy to fall to great iniquite ;
 Full well is he that is brydeled fast
 With fayre dame Reason tyll his youth be past.

I obeyed his rest; there was no remedy;
My youth was past, and all my lustynes;
And right anone to us came Polizy,
With Avaryce bringing great riches;
My hole pleasure and delyte doubtles
Was set upon treasure insaciate,
It to beholde and for to aggregate.

The fleshly pleasure I had cast asyde,
Lytle I loved for to playe or daunce;
But ever I thought how I might provyde
To spare my treasure, land or substaunce.
This was my minde, and all my purveyaunce,
As upon deth I thought lytle or never,
But gadred riches as I should lyve ever.

CAP. XLI.

HOWE HE WAS ARESTED BY DEATH.

BUT whan I thought longest to endure,
Deth with his darte arest me sodenly;
Obey! he sayd, as ye may be sure.
You can resist nothing the contrary
But that you must obey me naturally.
What you avayleth such treasure to take,
Sithens by force ye must it now forsake?

Alas! quod I, nothing can me ayde,
This worldly treasure I must leve behinde,
For erth of erth wyll have his dette now payde;
What is this world but a blast of wynde.
I must nedes dye, it is my native kinde.
And as I was at his last conclusyon,
To me did come dame Confession,

With dame Contricion, which gan to bewayle
My synnes great with hole repentaunce,
And Satisfaccion without any fayle,
Wyth dame Conscience, did wey in balaunce
How that they might than without doutaunce
My treasure and good so gotten wrongfully
To restore agayne to the rightfull party.

Of holy church with all humilite
My rightes I toke, and than incontinent
Nature avayled in so lowe degre
That deth was come, and all my lyfe was spent.
Out of my body my soule than it wente
To Purgatory, for to be purifyed,
That after that it might be glorified.

CAP. XLII.

HOWE REMEMBRAUNCE MADE HIS EPYTAPHY ON HIS
GRAVE.

THE good dame Mercy, with dame Charite,
My body buried full right humbly,
In a fayre temple of olde antiquite:
There was for me a dirige devoutly,
And with many a masse full right solemynely;
And over my grave to be in memory
Remembraunce made this lytle epetaphy:

O erth! on erth, it is a wonders case,
That thou art blynde and wyll not the know,
Though upon erth thou hast thy dwellyng place;
Yet erth at last must nedes the overthrow.
Thou thinkest thou do be no erth I trow,
For if thou diddest thou woldest than apply
To forsake pleasure and to lerne to dye.

Pryde.

O earth! of earth why art thou so proud?
Now what thou art call to remembraunce;
Open thine eares unto my song aloude;
Is not thy beaute, strength, and puyssaunce,
Though becladde with cloth of pleasaunce,
Very erth, and also wormes fode,
When erth to erth shall turne to the blode?

Wrath.

And, erth, with erth why art thou so wroth?
Remembre the that it vayleth right nought,
For thou mayst thinke, of a perfyte trothe,
If with the erth thou hast a quarell sought,
Amyddes the erth there is a place ywrought,
Whan erth to erth is torned properly,
The for thy synne to perrysh wonderly.

Envy.

And, erth, for erth why hast thou envy?
And the erth upon erth to be more prosperous
Than thou thy selfe fretting the inwardly?
It is a sinne right foule and vicious,
And unto God also full odious.
Thou thinkest, I trow, there is no punishment
Ordeyned for sinne by egall judgement.

Slouth.

Toward heven to folow on the way
Thou arte full slow, and thinkest nothing
That thy nature doth full sore decaye
And deth right fast is to the comyng.
God graunt the mercy, but no tyme enlongyng;
Whan thou hast time, take tyme and space,
Whan time is past, lost is the tyme of grace.

Covetyse.

And whan erth to erth is nexte to reverte,
And nature low in the last age,
Of erthly treasure erth doth sette his herte
Insatiately upon covetyse to rage;
He thynketh not his lyfe shall asswage,
His good is his God, with his great ryches,
He thinketh not for to leve it doutles.

Gluttony.

The pumped clerkes with foles delicious
Erth often fedeth with corrupt gluttony;
And nothing with werkes vertuous
The soule doth fede ryght well ententifly,
But without mesure full inordinatly
The body lyveth, and wyll not remember
Howe erth to erth must his strength surrender.

Lechery.

The vyle carkes set upon a fyre
Doth often haunte the syne of lechery,
Fulfyllyng the foule carnall desyre:
Thus erth with erth is corrupt mervaylously,
And erth on erth wyll nothing purify,
Till erth to erth be nere subverted,
For erth with erth is so perverted.

O mortall folke! you may beholde and se
Howe I lye here, sometime a myghty knyght;
The end of joye and all prosperite
Is deth at last, through his course and myght;
After the day there cometh the derke night;
For though the day be never so longe,
At last the belles ringeth to evensonge.

And my selfe called La Graunde Amoure,
Seking adventure in the worldly glory,
For to attayne the riches and honour,
Did thinke full lytle that I should here lye,
Tyll deth dyde marke me full ryght pryvely.
Lo what I am! and wherto you must!
Lyke as I am so shall you be all dust.

Than in your mynde inwardly despyse
The bryttle worlde, so full of doublenes,
With the vyle flesshe, and ryght sone aryse
Out of your slepe of mortall hevynes;
Subdue the devill with grace and mekenes,
That after your lyfe frayle and transitory,
You may than live in joye perdurably.

CAP. XLIII.

HOWE FAME CAME INTO THE TEMPLE WYTH BURNING
TONGUES AND OTHER PRAYSE.

AND as Remembraunce myne epytaphy set
Over my grave, in came dame Fame,
With brennyng tongues, without any let,
Sayeng that she would spreade about my name
To live in honoure without any shame:
Though that deade were my erthly body,
Yet my renowne shoulde raigne eternally.

The power, estate, and royall dignitie
Of dame Fame in every region
Is for to spreade by hye auctoritie
The noble dedes of many a champion,
As they are worthy in mine opinion;
For thoughe his body be dead and mortall,
His fame shall endure and be memoriall.

Did not Graunde Amoure with his royall dedes
Winne La Bell Pucell the most fayre lady?
And of hye honour attayned the medes,
In the demeanyng him so worthely,
Sleyng the great terrible giauntes ugly,
And also the fyry monster vyolent,
Of the seven metalles made by enchauntment.

About the worlde in every nacion,
That evermore he shall abyde alyve,
Of his great actes to make relacion,
In bokes many I shall of him contrive,
From one to other I shall his name so drive,
That evermore, without extinguyshment,
In burnyng tongues he shall be permanent.

Hector of Troy.

Unto this day reygne the hye renowne
Of the worthy Hector, prynce victorious:
About is spredde in every region and towne
His noble actes and courage chyvalrous,
In full many bokes ryght delicious,
Unto the reders howe lyst to geve audience,
To here reporte of his great excellence.

Josue.

And in lyke wyse duke Josue the gente,
Whiche was ryght strong and fyerce in battayle,
Whose noble feates hyghe and excellent
I have caused, wyth diligente travayle,
To abyde in bokes without ony fayle:
Who lyst his story for to se or here,
In the Byble it doth right well appere.

Judas Machabeus.

Also the noble and hardy feates of warre
Of Judas Machabeus I about have cast,
In every nacion for to reygne aferre;
Thoughe that his life out of this worlde be past,
His fame shal prospere and shall never wast;
Thus, wyth my power, of every worthy
I spred his dedes in tonges of memory.

Davyd.

Dyd not kyng Davyd a lyons jawe tere
In his tendre youth, he so hardy was?
The lyons cruelte myght nothinge him fere;
And after that he slewe great Golyas.
All in his time he dyd in honoure pas,
And I, dame Fame, wythout any doute,
Have spredde his name in all the worlde aboute.

Alexander.

Also kinge Alexander, the noble conquerour,
Whose great power in all the worlde was knowen,
Of me, dame Fame, he wanne the honoure,
As I my trompe after his death have blowen;
Whose sounde aloude can not be overthrowen.
Thus in flamynge tonges all aboute I flye
Throughe the worlde wyth my winges swyftly.

Julius Sezar.

And of the worthy Sezar Julyus,
All about wyth golden beames bryght,
His name shall dure and be full glorious;
In all the worlde wyth ardaunt tongues lyght
His fame shall reigne, he hath it wonne by ryght,
For to abyde and ever to augment
Wythouten lette or yet ympediment.

Arthur.

Also yet Arthur, the good kinge of Brittainye,
Wyth all his knightes of the rounde table,
I nowe, dame Fame, shall make to remayne
Their worthy actes highe and honourable,
Perpetually for to be commendable;
In ryall bokes and jestes hystoryall,
Theyr fame is knowen right hyghe tryumphall.

Charles.

And than Charles the great kynge of Fraunce,
Wyth all his noble douseperes also,
As Rowland, and Olyver, of hys alyaunce,
With all the resydue and many other mo,
Theyr fame encreaseth rennyng to and fro;
The hardy dedes did them magnify,
Unto me, Fame, their names to notyfy.

Godfrey of Boleyn.

And Godfrey of Boleine, of hardy courage,
That of the paynymys wanne the vycory,
His worthy actes did their strength aswage,
Whose fame renowned is ful openly
About the worlde reygnyng so ryally,
In flamynge tongues to be intellygyble,
His most hie actes so moche invyncible.

And in like wise without abatement,
I shall cause for to be memoriall
The famus actes so hyghe benevolent
Of Graunde Amoure, my knight in speciall;
His name shall dure and be eternall;
For though his body be wrapt in claye,
Yet his good fame shall remayne alway.

And ryght anone she called Remembraunce,
Commaundyng her ryght truely for to wryte
Both of myne actes and my governaunce,
Which than ryght sone began to endite
Of my feates of armes in a short respite,
Whose goodly stories in tongues severall
About were sent for to be perpetuall.

And thus I, Fame, am ever magnified
When earth in earth hath tane his estate;
Thus after death I am all glorified.
What is he nowe that can my power abate?
Infinite I am, nothing can me mate;
The spryng of honour and of famous clarkes,
My selfe I am to renowne their workes.

CAP. XLIV.

HOWE TYME CAME INTO THE TEMPLE IN A MARVAYLOUS
SEMILITUDE, AND OF HIS REPLYCATION.

AND as dame Fame was in laudation,
Into the temple with marveilous lykenes
Sodainly came Time in breviacion,
Whose similitude I shall anone expresse;
Aged he was, with a bearde doubtles,
Of swallowes feaders his wynges were long,
His body federed; he was hye and strong.

In his left hande he had an horology,
And in his ryght hande a fyre brennyng,
A swerde about hym gyrte full surely,
His legges armed clerely shynyng;
And on his noddle darkely flamyng
Was set Saturne, pale as any ledde,
And Jupiter amiddes his foreheade.

In the mouthe Mars; and in his ryght wyng
Was splendent Phebus with his golden beames;
And in his breast there was replendishyng
The shynyng Venus, with depured streames,
That all about did cast her fyry leames;
In his left wyng Mercury; and above his waste
Was horned Dyane, her opposition past.

My name, quod he, is in division;
As tyme was, tyme is, and the tyme future:
I marveyle muche of the presumption
Of the dame Fame so puttyng in ure
Thy great prayse, sayyng it shall endure
For to be infinite evermore in prease,
Seyng that I shall al thy honoure cease.

Shall not I, Tyme, destroye both sea and lande?
The sunne and mone, and the starres all,
By very reason thou shalt understande,
At last shall lese their course in generall.
On tyme past it vayleth not to call:
Nowe by this horologe it doth well appeare,
That my last name dothe evermore drawe neare.

Adam of erthe, sone of virginite,
And Eve by God of Adam create,
These two the worlde dampned in certayne,
By disobedience so foule and vycyate;
And all other than frome them generate,
Tyll peace and mercy made right to enclyne
Out of the Lyon to enter the Vyrgyne.

Lyke as the worlde was distroyed totally
By the virgins sone, so it semed well
A virgins sone to redeme it pyteously,
Whose hye Godheed in the chosen vessell
Forty wekes naturally did dwell.
Nature wekes naturally dyd good of kynde,
In the vyrgyn he dyd suche nature fynde.

Thus wythout nature nature wonderly
In a vyrgyn pure openly hath wrought;
To the God of nature nothyng truely
Impossyble is, for he made of nought
Nature fyrst; whyche natyrynge hath taught
Naturately right naturate to make;
Why may not he than the pure nature take

By his Godheed of the vyrgin Mary?
His elect mother and arke of testament,
Of holy chyrche the blessyd lumynary,
After the byrthe of her sone excellent,
Virgyn she was, yet alway permanent,
Dysnullynge the sectes of false idolatry,
And castynge downe the fatall heresy.

Thus whan I, Tyme, in every nacyon
Reygne in rest and also in peace;
And Octavyan, in hys dominacyon,
Throughe the worlde and the peopled preace
Letters had sent, his honoure to encrease;
Of all the numbere for to be certayne
For to abey hym as theyr soverayne :

In whose tyme God toke his nativitie,
For to redeme us with his precious bloud,
From the devils bonde of great iniquitie:
His hart was perst hangyng on the rode;
Was not this tyme unto man ryght good?
Shall not I, Tyme, evermore abyde,
Tyll that in Libra at the dreadfull tyde

Of the daye of dome then in the balaunce,
Almyghty God shall be just and egall
To every persone withouten doubtaunce,
Eche as they dyd deserve in generall,
Some to have joye, and some payne eternall,
Then I am past, I may no lenger be,
And after me is dame Eternitie.

CAP. XLV.

HOWE ETERNYTE CAME INTO THE TEMPLE, AND OF HER
VERTUOUS EXHORTACYON.

AND thus, as Tyme made his conclusion,
Eternitie, in a fayre white vesture
To the temple came, with whole affection,
And on her head a diademe ryght pure,
With thre crownes of precious treasure;
Eternitie, she sayde, I am nowe doubtles,
Of heaven quene and of hell empresse.

First God made heaven his propre habitacle,
Though that his power be in every place,
In eterne heaven is his tabernacle;
Time is there in no maner of case;
Time renneth alway his ende to embrace;
Nowe I my selfe shall have no endyng,
And my maker had no begynnnyng.

In heaven and hell I am continually
Withouten ende to be inextinguissible,
As evermore to reygne full royally,
Of every thyng I am invincible:
Man of my power shall be intelligible.
When the soule shall ryse against the body,
To have judgement to live eternally

In heaven or hell as he doth deserve:
Who that loveth God above every thyng

All his commaundementes he will then observe,
And spende his tyme in vertuous livyng;
Idlenes will evermore be escheuyng;
Eternall joye he shall then attayne,
After his laboure and his busy payne.

O mortall folke! revolve in your mynde
That worldly joye and frayle prosperitie
What is it lyke, but a blast of wynde?
For you therof can have no certaintie:
It is nowe so full of mutabilitie;
Set not your mynde upon worldly wealth,
But evermore regarde your soules health.

When earth in earth hath tane his corrupt taste,
Then to repent it is for you to late;
When you save tyme, spende it nothing in waste;
Tyme past with vertue must enter the gate
Of joye and blysse, with myne hie estate,
Without tyme for to be everlastyng,
Whiche God graunt us at our last endyng.

Nowe, blessed lady of the health eternall,
The quene of comfort and of heavenly glory,
Praye to thy swete sonne whiche is infinall,
To geve me grace to wyne the victory
Of the devill, the worlde, and of my body,
And that I may my selfe well apply
Thy sonne and the to laude and magnifie.

Here endeth the Pastime of Pleasure.

THE EXCUSATION OF THE AUCTOUR.

UNTO all Poetes I do me excuse,
 If that I offende for lacke of science;
 This lyttle boke yet do ye not refuse,
 Though it be devoyde of famous eloquence;
 Adde or detra by your hye sapience;
 And pardon me of my hye enterpryse,
 Whiche of late this fable dyd fayne and devise.

Go, little boke! I praye God the save
 From misse metryng by wrong impression;
 And who that ever list the for to have,
 That he perceyve well thyne intencion,
 For to be grounded without presumption,
 As for to eschue the synne of ydlenes;
 To make suche bokes I apply my busines.

Besechyng God for to geve me grace
 Bokes to compyle of moral vertue;
 Of my maister Lidgate to folowe the trace,
 His noble fame for laude and renue,
 Whiche in his lyfe the slouthe did eschue;
 Makyng great bokes to be in memory,
 On whose soule I pray God have mercy.

FINIS.

¶ Imprinted at London in Fletestreate, at the signe of the
 Hande and Starre, by Rychard Tottell.

ANNO M.D.LV.

